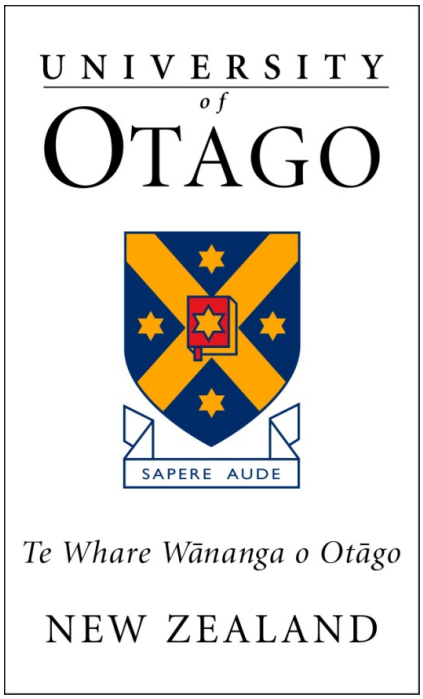
Victims, Suffering, and Reconciliation:

A narrative investigation of victims' autobiographies in the aftermath of political violence in South Korea



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Abstract

Victim issues have received increasing attention under the ethic of 'victim-centeredness' in peace and conflict studies. Resting on the belief that victim-driven practices are an effective peacebuilding strategy, scholars have investigated the roles of victims and victimhood in peace and reconciliation in deeply divided societies. While most researchers focus on victims' needs and roles, little research has inquired into the victims' internal processing of endorsing reconciliation in the presence of suffering. The conventional approach to victim-centeredness requires a more nuanced explanation of victims' perspectives on the value of reconciliation, to more adequately associate the ethic of victim-centeredness with peacebuilding practices.

Investigating this research gap, this thesis examines how victims interpret their suffering and perceive themselves as subjects of peace, which produce generative meanings of reconciliation in the aftermath of political violence in South Korea. The thesis employs the narrative theories of the self, identity, and meaning, which assert that individuals are narrative selves who compose life stories based on their identity, which affects the emplotment of storylines and mobilizes meaning-making processes. The study focuses on victims' identity-based narrative processing and its implications for making sense of the social world after violence. This involves self-recognition and an acknowledgement of the social value of reconciliation. A qualitative narrative inquiry was adopted to investigate the autobiographies of eighteen surviving and bereaved family members of civilian massacres during the Korean War.

The thesis focuses on national, familial, and religious identities. Each identity leads victims to construct a particular set of storylines, scaffolding their subjective views on violent events and a life of guilt and suppression. Their perspectives are formed by identity-based autobiographical reasoning, presenting different mindset and worldviews to make sense of their victimization and suffering. Self-recognition serves not only to develop images of selfhood, but also to underline their roles in national history and within their families. Meanings of reconciliation are generated in concert with this narrative processing. This study found that victim-centred reconciliation is multi-layered, with both redemptive and practical characteristics. It connects strongly with the ethics of peace, justice, and historical correction. Reconciliation eventually needs to play a role in social transformation.

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Abbreviations

ABS	Altruism Born of Suffering
BFA	Bereavement Family Association
DPRK	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea
KCIA	Korean Central Intelligence Agency
KPA	Korean People's Army
NSL	National Security Law
PACS	Peace and Conflict Studies
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
ROKA	The Republic of Korean Army
ROK	The Republic of Korea
TRCK	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TJ	Transitional Justice

Setting the Stage

Chapter 1
Introduction

> Reconciliation, in essence, represents a place, the point of encounter where concerns about both the past and the future can meet. Reconciliation-as-encounter suggests that space for the acknowledging of the past and envisioning of the future is the necessary ingredient for reframing the present. For this to happen, people must find ways to encounter themselves and their enemies, their hopes and their fears.
>
> John Paul Lederach, 1997[1]

1.1 Research Background

Since 2005, South Korean society has faced significant social and political pressure to address and settle the past wrongdoings of state-led political violence and resulting victim issues. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea (TRCK) launched its mandated activities, following former president Roh Moo-Hyun's appeal for comprehensive dealing with the past, the society paid unprecedented attention to coming to terms with its violent past. Through this extraordinary institution, modelled on the South African approach to truth and reconciliation in the post-apartheid era, South Korean society anticipated progressing democracy and facilitating national reconciliation in the aftermath of state-led political violence. For those tasks, the TRCK made notable attempts to re-establish historical truth and justice. Claiming the principle of victim-centeredness, it worked to redress past errors, restore the abused human rights and dignity of victims and their impaired reputations, and pay them appropriate reparations.[2] In this way the national project of reconciliation and victim issues was intended to be achieved by activities of the TRCK.[3]

Despite the corrective scheme of building social integration in the aftermath of unjust state-led political violence, the capacity of the TRCK to promote reconciliation and resolve victim issues has been frequently questioned; a political dispute on reconciliation and lack of continuity in

[1] John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 27.
[2] Byung-Ook Ahn, 'Truth and Reconciliation: Activities of the Past Three Years' (Seoul: Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea, 2009).
[3] Dong-Choon Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: An Overview and Assessment', *Buffalo Human Right Law Review* 19 (2013): 97–124.

victim support discouraged such tasks. First, the TRCK was a politically sensitive institution, coupled with historical and political identity between conservatives and liberals.[4] The work of dealing with the violent past, identifying perpetrators and victims, was opposed by the conservative politicians, as they were ideologically in line with the harm-doers, who committed political violence and yet evaded their legal responsibility. From the position of the conservative parties, the TRCK's activities to find historical truth for victims and bring perpetrators to justice were prone to the politics of the leftists or the liberals, intending to change modern Korean historical narratives, which had underpinned the society under anti-communism narratives and policy.[5] For them, it was a political threat in the presence of divided political identity and historical interpretation, acting as an impediment for social integration and reconciliation from the outset. Thus, although the institution carried out truth-finding initiatives and offered reconciliatory or restorative measures thereafter, it hardly served the purpose of social integration, and instead caused a political backlash.[6] This has resulted in delayed national reconciliation in South Korea.

Second, the TRCK itself was unable to settle victim issues, because of the institution's limited mandate of its activities (2005-2010). It could only implement finite efforts for compensation, trauma healing, and restoration of impaired reputations. Also, truth-findings were performed based on applications for which a relatively small number of victims applied; the majority of victims could not determine their truth unless they submitted the applications.[7] Even those victims who found the truth had to instigate legal proceedings for compensation by themselves, as the TRCK had no authority to determine the legal rights of victims and perpetrators.[8] After the activities ended in 2010, there were no public fora for victims to demonstrate their victimization. There has hardly been any government support for trauma healing and resilience programs for victims, leaving private institutions to take on those roles. Some measures of reconciliation, such as memorial services also ceased as the TRCK activities ended. The lack of institutional support,[9] as a result, has resulted in most victims living with their traumatic memories with little or no public acknowledgement of their plight. Although victims have lived as second-class citizens due to stigmatization after the violence, they experience disregard, denial, and amnesia towards their suffering, perpetuating their trauma.[10] Moreover, victims are forgotten, and their aspirations are

[4] Jae-Jung Suh, 'Truth and Reconciliation in South Korea: Confronting War, Colonialism, and Intervention in the Asia Pacific', *Critical Asian Studies* 42, no. 4 (2010): 503–24.
[5] Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission'.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ahn, 'Truth and Reconciliation'.
[8] Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission'.
[9] Suh, 'Truth and Reconciliation in South Korea; Dong-Choon Kim, 'The Long Road Toward Truth and Reconciliation: Unwavering Attempts to Achieve Justice in South Korea', *Critical Asian Studies* 42, no. 4 (2010): 525–52.
[10] Eun-Jae Kim and Sung-Chun Kim, 'A Case Study on the Victims under State Implication System - Surviving as Eternal Fugitives', *Journal of Critical Social Welfare* 51 (2016): 244–91; Dongjin Lee, 'The Boundaries between "Citizens" and "Non-Citizens": A Case of Korean War-Bereaved Association Incidents', *Society and History* 101 (2014): 141–82.

regarded as a vexing obstacle for social integration, reminding the public of an uncomfortable and forgotten past.[11]

Despite such unfavorable social and political conditions, victims of political violence do not just adapt their bitterness and trauma to the current social and political situation, but rather show some level of restoration or resilience from trauma, maintaining equilibrium in a way to participate in political activities which demand truth and justice. Victims gather together in public spaces, in order to raise their voices and lobby politicians to resume TRC processes by amending the law. Victims justify and advocate for the need for reconciliation, which has been removed from the political interest. For instance, victims of the Jeju 4.3 massacres, of civilian massacres in the Korean War, and others, have put collective pressure on governments to find the truth, ensure justice, pay reparations, and restore their reputation as a form of historical and social reconciliation, none of which has been achieved in the last few decades. They seem no longer passive objects or political tools, but instead act as subjective powers in society. Victims' proactive demands for the settlement of the violent past, as a result, has become a social phenomenon in the country.

This phenomenon, viewed from victims' political involvement, provides an unusual stance on the ability and roles of victims in contributing to reconciliation while the national vision of reconciliation has been halted or denied. It has motivated this research, drawing new attention to why and how victims come to advocate reconciliation, in the absence of institutional support for their trauma healing as well as public recognition of their suffering. It reflects a growing academic interest in victims' perspectives on reconciliation, relating to their lived experience of victimization and continued suffering in society. It requires an in-depth explanation of victims' internal processing, with regard to their suffering and the value of reconciliation.

1.2 Research Rationale, Aim and Questions

The South Korean situation for victims and reconciliation in the context of political violence and clearing up the past wrongdoings mirrors an academic focus on victim-centeredness in peace and conflict studies.[12] As part of post-conflict reconstruction, peace scholars have paid growing attention to victims and victimhood, being concerned with the application of victims' perspectives to different peacebuilding strategies. Theorists underline that victims' needs, voices, and roles

[11] Dong-Choon Kim, *War and Society* (Seoul: Dolbaegae, 2000).
[12] Jemima Garćia-Godos, 'Review Essay. Victims in Focus', *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 10 (2016): 350–58.

have great potential to build sustainable peace and reconciliation after violent conflict. In particular, scholars in the fields of transitional justice and peacebuilding stress victims' voices from their lived experience as a down-to-earth resolution of dealing with the ramifications of violent conflicts.[13] Undertaking victim-focused practices, scholars develop victims' knowledge and experience as a critical source for building sustainable peace in societies where social and political factions protract legacies of the violent past. In this way, the focus on victim-centeredness has grown within peace and conflict studies.

However, previous studies have argued that while the victim-centered approach has extensively elaborated victims' needs and aspirations after violent conflict, it has paid little attention to victims' deeper motivation or internal reasoning for promoting peace-related values. Scholars tend to understand that victims are passive, vulnerable, and objective, and are thus incapable of restoring themselves, but instead need external supports.[14] While the need approach is theoretically and empirically valid, the conventional perception of victims and victimhood makes it hard to comprehend victims' agentic roles in contributing to peacebuilding practices. Within this academic orientation, the extent to which victims have the capacity to lead their daily lives and develop perspectives on social values is ignored. As a result, a deeper understanding of how victims interpret their lives, how they have experienced victimization and how they motivate themselves to act as agents for social reconciliation remains unknown.

Recent studies have begun to notice that victims tend to rely extensively on individual coping mechanisms to deal with stress and trauma resulting from memories of violent events.[15] Unlike external support that offers short-term responses, their own mechanisms allow victims to be more resilient and healed, and motivate them to become socially active. Realizing the importance of private agents, a group of scholars underline the victims' self-directed way of dealing with suffering, and of motivating themselves as participatory social actors. They pay attention to victims' internal processing, that makes sense of their suffering and gives meaning to their lives. As Mani asserts, victims' life experience and their ability to restore and reintegrate themselves into society needs more attention. That is to say, because victims' individual journeys towards healing and resilience is unique, transitional justice and peacebuilding programs must "treat each victim as a whole human being with the inherent potential to resume a meaningful life and

[13] Vincent Durliolle and Roddy Brett, 'Introduction: Understanding the Construction of Victimhood and the Evolving Role of Victims in Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding', in *The Politics of Victimhood in Post-Conflict Societies: Comparative and Analytical Perspectives*, ed. Vicent Durliolle and Roddy Brett (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 1–22.
[14] Marie Breen-Smyth, *Truth Recovery and Justice after Conflict: Managing Violent Pasts* (London: Routledge, 2007).
[15] Rama Mani, 'Integral Justice for Victims', in *Justice for Victims: Perspectives on Rights, Transition and Reconciliation*, ed. Inge Vanfraechem, Antony Pemberton, and Felix Mukwiza Ndahinda (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), 183–209.

contribute richly to society".[16] Aligning with this point of view, other scholars have begun to shift their perspectives on victims, focusing on their self-understanding[17] and locating their roles in the process of building peace in deeply divided societies.[18] They try to discover victims' detailed motivations to engage in the values of peace and reconciliation by investigating their voices and stories. The new approach to victim-centeredness requires a careful and thorough examination of why victims of political violence come to act to urge social transformation from a suppressed social milieu.

The South Korean context and the academic discussion in peace and conflict studies construct the foundation of this thesis. It raises a salient yet underestimated question: On what grounds are victims motivated to perceive their life experiences of violence and suffering in a way to create a meaning for reconciliation? That is, while numerous studies have investigated institutional reconciliation and victim healing, this research pays attention to discovering victims' complex internal reasoning, motivating themselves to espouse reconciliation in the presence of social bias and lives of suffering. This thesis is an attempt to respond to these unasked questions, regarding South Korean victims of political violence.

Research Aim

This study aims to address victims' internal reasoning for reconciliation. It delves into the self-directed mechanisms that make sense of their suffering, and that insist on reconciliation in South Korea. This research requires a cognitive realignment to see victims not as passive and objective, but instead as active and subjective social actors who struggle with life challenges emerging from traumatic events, and who have great potential to use such painful experiences for social transformation. To do so, this thesis assumes that victims utilize their narrative processing by which experiences of victimization are interpreted and meanings of reconciliation found when they develop their autobiographical accounts. By examining the process in detail, this study will provide deeper knowledge of victims' individual ways of overcoming pain, building resilience, and meaning-making through reconciliatory processes.

[16] Ibid, 185.
[17] Sabina Čehajić-Clancy et al., 'Social-Psychological Interventions for Intergroup Reconciliation: An Emotion Regulation Perspective', *Psychological Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2016): 73–88; Felicia Pratto and Demis E. Glasford, 'How Needs Can Motivate Intergroup Reconciliation in the Face of Intergroup Conflict', in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation*, ed. Arie Nadler, Thomas E. Mally, and Jeffrey D. Fisher (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 117–44.
[18] John D. Brewer et al., *The Sociology of Everyday Life Peacebuilding* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

This research intends to deliver academic contributions in three ways. First, it expects to offer a critical research implication for peace and conflict studies. As this research focuses on victims' internal processing of their suffering and reconciliation, it may provide a unique explanation of victim-focused practices, including peacebuilding and transitional justice. As noted, while a vast number of scholars adopt the ethic of victim-centeredness, investigating victims' voices and needs, most studies tend to instrumentalize their voices for a political purpose, or argue their needs for institutional support. This body of research is attributed to a general cognition of victims as beneficiaries of external supports, rather than as subjective actors. It overlooks the fact that victims have a capacity to be resilient following conflict-related trauma and social suffering, and to defend peace and reconciliation. Present peace and conflict studies, therefore, have little knowledge of how victims create meaning in their lives after violence by coping with their stress and trauma under a feeling of insecurity. That is, while the theme of victim-centeredness has rapidly grown in the last few decades, a deeper understanding of victims' reasoning for espousing peace-related social values is scarce. It limits the discussion on victim-centeredness to policy-making, instead of drawing explicit attention to victims' subjective points of view on such practices.

Second, in peace psychology, some researchers have investigated the relationship between victims' positive mindsets and peacebuilding. While most peace psychologists examine the psychological approach to intergroup relations,[19] they focus on how victims' morality, altruism, and inclusive beliefs promote peacebuilding strategies.[20] This research provided convincing evidence of the correlation between variables, using quantitative methodologies to show general tendencies in victims' behaviors. Despite the importance, no research provides a full description of victims' internal processing related to reconciliation.

Third, this thesis also provides meaningful input to the theme of reconciliation and victim issues in South Korea. Both subjects, despite their importance, have not received full attention from earlier studies. Because it triggers political dispute, only a small number of historians and sociologists have focused on the issue of reconciliation and victim issues concerning state-led political violence and its social impact. Most theorists understand both themes in relation to the transitional justice mechanism, and some psychologists propose measurements of victim healing. However, these academic attempts lack empirical evidence. A focus on oral history and

[19] See, Arie Nadler, Thomas E. Malloy, and Jeffery D. Fisher, eds., *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[20] Nurit Shnabel and Arie Nadler, 'A Need-Based Model of Reconciliation: Satisfying the Differential Emotional Needs of Victim and Perpetrator as a Key to Promoting Reconciliation', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94, no. 1 (2008): 116–32; Nurit Schnabel et al., 'Promoting Reconciliation Through the Satisfaction of the Emotional Needs of Victimized and Perpetrating Group Members: The Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 35, no. 8 (2009): 1021–31.

storytelling around violence and social stigma has begun to grow, and yet those studies fail to expand the discussion on victims' healing through storytelling as a ground for their social behaviors and meaning-making. This study thus offers a particular angle on the issue of reconciliation and victim issues by looking at victims' autobiographical narratives.

Judging from these limitations in previous research, this study, to the best of my knowledge, is one of the first attempts to address these knowledge gaps in peace and conflict studies and in South Korea, in particular, under the theme of victim-centeredness. Consequently, this thesis sheds light on positive functions of self-directed mechanisms, leading victims to the process of healing, resilience, and meaning in life, and it brings previously unheard victims' voices to the discussion of reconciliation.

Research Questions

This thesis poses one main question, elaborated by three subsequent questions: 'How do victims of political violence develop subjective perspectives on reconciliation in the presence of suffering?'

1) How can victims make sense of their daily lives in the presence of continued victimization?
2) What kind of self-images do victims recognize and develop as their own in the absence of social recognition of their suffering?
3) What aspects and meanings of reconciliation do victims espouse, and how can they utilize their experience to build a reconciled society in the aftermath of political violence?

1.3 Overview of Methodology and Research Findings

This thesis uses a qualitative research method to respond to the research questions. It intends to provide in-depth knowledge on the questions from respondents' life stories. Amongst many other forms, biographical narrative inquiry was chosen due to its appropriateness for examining personal experience and meaning-making in life stories.[21] In conducting the inquiry regarding the research purpose, this study is built upon narrative theories of the self, identity, and meaning. The theories assume that individuals are narrative selves who realize who they are and how they came

[21] Louis M. Smity, 'Biographical Method', in *SAGE Biographical Research*, vol. 1, SAGE Library of Research Methods (London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2012), 1–36; F. Michael Connelly and D. Jean Clandinin, 'Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry', *Educational Researcher* 19, no. 5 (1990): 2–14; D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).

to be in composing autobiographical narratives, and how their autobiographically formed identity affects the process of meaning-making of life events, so as to maintain structural and thematic coherence. In particular, the theoretical framework of this thesis is founded on the abductive method of reasoning. Abductive reasoning infers research findings, through an active conversation between theorization and the findings.[22] It means that a theoretical framework is created via a reflective theorization process, which brings research findings into a framework, and theories are tailored to explain what emerges from the data collected in a focused way. It offers a combination of bedrock theories and some application of them, mirroring the findings. Thus, the theoretical framework is developed based on the founding theories and some theoretical lines, which are relevant to the findings after the first round of data collection and analysis. Designing research method in this way, this thesis reports complex findings in a coherent manner.

Data analysis consists of structural and thematic investigation. Both analyses examine an extensive amount of narrative data according to an analytical framework. Informants in this study present identity-centered autobiographical narrative processing. Three distinct identities emerge when they recount and generate some meaning of reconciliation in relation to their experience of civilian massacres and ensuing victimization: national, familial, and religious identity. While life stories are narrated centering around personal memories of civilian massacres, their understanding of suffering, self-recognition and the meanings of reconciliation align with the present identities they address.

To overview the research findings, first, those victims who preserve national identity in the aftermath of civilian massacres create personal stories as historical witness. They maintain strong pride as Koreans in line with the nationalist understanding of history. In their perspectives, civilian massacres and suffering are mirrored in a broader view of modern Korean history in the 20th century. These participants defend their national identity, even though they are suppressed victims. The nationalist narratives and mindsets lead them to realize that they are historical subjects with a just interpretation of history, and moral agents, who display moral behaviors concerning the development of society after the violence. This narrative processing allows victims to think of reconciliation as victim-centered, dealing with the past through shared memory and narratives, and as the critical foundation for peace in the Korean Peninsula.

Second, those who address family identity locate their individual experiences as part of a wider

[22] Iddo Tavory and Stefan Timmermans, *Abductive Analysis: Theorizing Qualitative Research* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2014); Atocha Aliseda, *Abductive Reasoning: Logical Investigations into Discovery and Explanation* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006); Douglas Walton, *Abductive Reasoning* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2005).

family story. These participants are focused on who they are and their roles within the family boundary. In their autobiographies, diverse family events and values are described, in order to show that their families can be reconstructed even after the destruction by civilian massacres. Rooted in familial mindsets, they view themselves as the head and protector of the family, who is obliged to restore the shattered family, and as a messenger to convey family values to younger generations, informing them of who they are and how to behave, despite continued suppression. For those informants, reconciliation is not conceived as revengeful actions or social justice. Instead, it restores the impaired family reputation and corrects historical wrongs.

Third, participants often hold a strong religious identity in composing their life stories. In particular, Christian victims tell and write their life stories as if they were confessing religious experiences. By using different forms of religious rhetoric, they adopt religious narratives as an interpretative framework for the past events and meaning-making for reconciliation. Those participants rely on eschatological or apocalyptic narratives. Their understanding of violent events is associated with the binary division between good and evil. Although violent events and lives of suffering belong to worldly experience, they trust divine providence, which encourages human beings to believe that life, suffering and human history is part of God's cosmic plan. Being embedded in the eschatological approach, these victims describe themselves as children of God and redemptive sufferers. In this understanding, reconciliation is viewed with a sense of justice, forgiveness, and deterrence.

1.4 Defining Key Terms

This study utilizes several key terms that are widely used within peace and conflict studies. These terms are political violence, victims, deeply divided society, and narrative as autobiographical story-making, all of which may cause confusion without clarity. Thus, defining the terms is necessary. While the meaning of some terms will be determined in this section, others will later be developed in depth later.

Political Violence

Political violence is an umbrella term referring to different forms of violence, motivated by political interests and conducted by political agencies. Usually, political violence indicates violent

acts that political groups or communities use to achieve their political goals.[23] Those violent acts include physical, psychological and symbolic harm to people in the form of revolution, terrorism, civil war, genocide, war crimes, and torture,[24] in concert with the political structure, agents, and narratives.[25] Political violence carried out by the authorized powers towards civilians may be called 'institutional' or 'state-sponsored' violence. Political violence in this sense is marked by brutal acts of injustice when political authority fails to project citizens and generates widespread civilian insecurity.[26] When political violence is justified and carried out for the establishment and maintenance of a government's national governance,

> agent of the state soldiers, policemen, intelligence officers commit political injustices when they create and enforce unjust laws, start wars of aggression, or commit crimes in the course wars, smaller military actions, or any operation in which they seek to maintain order and security, national unity, or simply the survival of their regime.[27]

In this thesis, I use the term 'political violence' to indicate oppressive and radicalized violence practised by authorized powers to maintain and expand their current regime, using violent means to control their citizens. In understanding political violence in such a way, the concept of politicide clarifies it further. Politicide comes from the term 'genocide', and refers to the promotion, execution, or implied consent of sustained policies which are manipulated by governing elites or their agents to destroy, in whole or part, a communal, political, or politicized ethnic group.[28] It is governmentally organized, systematic, purposeful mass killing of a particular group or political opponents to eradicate their existence, as they have been recognized as a political threat to the government's plan for establishing or maintaining its power.[29] Politicide often appears in a civil

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[23] Vincenzo Ruggiero, *Understanding Political Violence: A Criminological Analysis*, Crime and Justice (New York: Open University Press, 2006); Kirsti Samuels, *Political Violence and the International Community: Developments in International Law and Policy* (Leiden & Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007).

[24] Steffen Krügger, Karl Figlio, and Barry Richards, 'Fomenting Political Violence: An Introduction', in *Fomenting Political Violence: Fantasy, Language, Media, Action*, ed. Steffen Krüger, Karl Figlio, and Barry Richards (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[25] Richard Jackson and Helen Dexter, 'The Social Construction of Organized Political Violence: An Analytical Framework', *Civil Wars* 16, no. 1 (2014): 1–23.

[26] Ruggiero, *Understanding Political Violence,* 1

[27] Daniel Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace*, Strategic Peacebuilding 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 24. It is also important to notice that politically violent acts are not only performed by the authorized force towards citizens but also by non-authorized citizens against the authorized as an expression of defiance against to authority. That is, political violence has two distinctive forms of oppressing the mass governed and subverting the present regime. As Samuels stated, political violence "within a state can take the form of a range of violent struggles aiming to capture or retain political power in a state, including civil conflict, coup d'état, terrorist actions, as well as riots or violent demonstrations and the violent repression of such movements." Samuels, *Political Violence and the International Community*, 1.

[28] Barbara Harff, 'No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955', *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 57–73, 58.

[29] Gary Uzonyi, 'Civil War Victory and the Onset of Genocide and Politicide', *International Interactions*, 41, no. 2 (2015): 365–91; Merav Amir, 'Revisiting Politicide: State Annihilation in Israel/Palestine', *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 5, no.

war because civil war gives the government a great opportunity "to completely destroy their enemy and its supporters so as to maintain control of the country."[30]

Victims of Political Violence

Defining who counts as victims is a debatable terminological issue because the status of 'victim' in societies emerging from violent conflict is built upon an identity contestation between victims and perpetrators.[31] It is even more complicated when violent acts are mutual, so that each party conducts the same violent acts towards others.[32] Therefore, victims are often equated with victimhood which leads to a misunderstanding of those who were or are directly victimized by political violence.[33] Victims and victimhood become obfuscated, as different groups have different memories and narratives of violent conflict, intensifying the contested victimhood.[34] The blurred lines between victims and perpetrators concerning the cycle of violence[35] make the process of dealing with the past even more challenging.[36] In these conditions, acknowledging and recognizing victims is a sensitive issue.[37]

Nonetheless, there have been several attempts to define victims in the context of political violence. For example, Madina, Bilbao and Bermudez offer a perspective on the identification of victims, in

4 (2017): 368–87.

[30] Uzonyi, 'Civil War Victory and the Onset of Genocide and Politicide', 365.

[31] Tami Amanda Jacoby, 'A Theory of Victimhood: Politics, Conflict and the Construction of Victim-Based Identity', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43, no. 2 (2015): 511–30.

[32] Ibid; Tristan Anne Borer, 'A Taxonomy of Victims and Perpetrators: Human Rights and Reconciliation in South Africa', *Human Rights Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2003): 1088–1116.

[33] Jacoby, 'A Theory of Victimhood'.

[34] Breen-Smyth, *Truth Recovery and Justice after Conflict*.

[35] Borer, 'A Taxonomy of Victims and Perpetrators'; Jacoby, 'A Theory of Victimhood'; John D. Brewer and Bernadette C. Hayes, 'Victimhood Status and Public Attitudes Towards Post-Conflict Agreements: Northern Ireland as a Case Study', *Political Studies* 61 (2013): 442–61; Breen-Smyth, *Truth Recovery and Justice after Conflict*.

[36] Anna Bryson, 'Victims, Violence, and Voice: Transitional Justice, Oral History, and Dealing with the Past', *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review* 39 (2016): 299–354; Yvette Selim, 'Examining Victims and Perpetrators in Post-Conflict Nepal', *International Review of Victimology* 23, no. 3 (2017): 275–301.

[37] Brewer and Hayes have paid extensive attention to these sensitive issues in the context of Northern Ireland, where lives of social members are deeply affected by conflictual groups identities, memories, and narratives between the (mainly Catholic) Nationalist population and the (mainly Protestant) Unionists. They found out and built a typology of victims in the Northern Ireland context, in order to provide "a systematic and inclusive account of the views of victims as determined both by their own experience of violence as well as self-assessed perceptions of victimhood." Brewer and Hayes, 'Victimhood Status and Public Attitudes Towards Post-Conflict Agreements', 445. They suggest four categories of victims who experienced direct or indirect political violence: individual victims (individuals who had directly or indirectly experienced violent instances and perceived themselves as victims), silent victims (those who had directly and indirectly experienced violent instances but do not perceive themselves as victims), collective victims (those who had not either directly and indirectly experienced violence but perceived themselves as victims at the groups level), and non-victims (those who had not experienced any violence and did not perceive themselves as victims). In the same vein, Borer has found out that there is a general tendency to distinguish victims and perpetrators as a fixed group in the South African context. She concludes that the clear distinction between victims and perpetrators is doubtful in the presence of violence and revenge. Because there are victims who once were perpetrators and perpetrators who were once victims, making a clear-cut definition of 'pure' victims or perpetrators must be challenged. See, Borer, 'A Taxonomy of Victims and Perpetrators'.

which individual victims are affected by some degree of collective victimhood based on group identities.[38] According to this view, as victims of political violence are a creation of intentional and unjust acts of violence, a moral asymmetry is critical in differentiating between perpetrators and victims. For someone to be recognized as victim, he or she firstly ought to be innocent in relation to having had their human rights abused, that is, passivity in the victimization. The moral consideration makes clear who are victims, in that they were or are innocently and passively harmed by perpetrators' violent acts.

The UN General Assembly in '*Declaration on the Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crimes and Abuses of Power*' defines victims as persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws operative within Member States, including those laws proscribing criminal abuse of power […] The term "victim" also includes, where appropriate, the immediate family or dependents of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization.[39]

Van Boven interprets the U.N.'s definition, explaining that victims are people who suffer from physical or mental harm or economic loss as well as impairment of fundamental rights. There can be both direct and indirect victims who are surviving and immediate family members or dependents of direct victims.[40] In a similar vein, Bloomfield suggests understanding victims as 'surviving injured', those 'who care for them', and 'close relatives who mourn their dead'.[41] Given these perspectives, this thesis uses the term 'victims' to indicate those who are surviving and bereaved family members harmed by political violence. It not only includes anyone who directly suffers from physical violence, but also those who are immediate family members and dependents. This sense specifies that they are innocent of violence, and that their lives are socially, economically, and politically suppressed as a result of the violent event.

This definition is also critical to the South Korean context of political violence. According to the

[38] Irene G. Madina, Galo Bilbao, and Angela Bermudez, 'Recognizing Victims of Political Violence: Basque: Literary Narratives as an Ethical Tool', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2018, 1–17.
[39] 'Compendium of United Nations Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice' (New York: United Nation, 2006), 203. Available at https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Compendium_UN_Standards_and_Norms_CP_and_CJ_English.pdf
[40] Theo van Boven, 'Victims' Rights to a Remedy and Reparation: The New United Nations Principles and Guidelines', in *Reparations for Victims of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity: Systems in Place and Systems in the Making*, ed. Carla Ferstman, Mariana Goetz, and Alan Stephens (Leiden; Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009), 19–40, 35. See also, David Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: A Handbook* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2003).
[41] Kenneth Bloomfield, 'We Will Remember Them', 1998.
Available at https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/issues/violence/victims.htm.

Framework Act on Clearing up Past Incidents for Truth and Reconciliation,[42] victims are those who were killed by official forces of political agencies. The TRCK report differentiates victims, survivors, and bereaved families. However, this definition of victims does not cover those who were affected by the ramification of political violence as a whole.[43] In South Korea, victims of political violence were severely harmed by the state-sponsored mass killing as a sort of politicide, socially and politically, as well as psychologically and physically. They struggle with socio-political victimization, being regarded as second-class citizens. They are subject to ongoing oppression, exclusion, and discrimination in the social and public structure, making them isolated and silenced. The definition of victims thus needs to consider these broader effects of harm on those who are affected by violent acts. This thesis focuses on 'surviving and bereaved family members' as victims in the context of political violence in South Korea. The contextual background and the definition of victims will be further developed in the next chapter.

Deeply Divided Societies

The notion of deeply divided societies has received significant attention in peace and conflict studies. Together with terms like post-conflict societies, deeply divided societies imply a complex social structure caused by violent conflict. The term can be clarified in realizing the conditions of a society in which all aspects have been ruptured by physical, structural and cultural kinds of violence, and the social structure runs on binary lines of class, caste, religion, languages, ethnicity, race, and clan, divided by the violence.[44] These societies' social mechanisms are parallel to post-conflict situations, where the direct and immediate threats of violence are postponed and people's lives are deeply embedded in hostility and antagonism towards other groups.[45] These societies are marked by historical violence, divided memories and identities, which crystalize social cleavages, challenging people's day-to-day lives.[46] Conflict in these societies becomes protracted and is transmitted over generations.[47] People may be fearful from ongoing violence and struggle with social stigma acting on them as an existential threat; thus, a low level of security. These features jeopardize democracy and hamper social integration between political and social

[42] Available at https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/ROL/Framework_Act.pdf
[43] Jin-Ho Song, 'Review of Acts on the Liquidation of the Past of Republic of Korea - Discussion about Relief of Victims', *Law Review* 57, no. 2 (2016): 29–60.
[44] Adrian Guelke, *Politics in Deeply Divided Societies* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012).
[45] Sarah Maddison, *Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation: Multi-Level Challenges in Deeply Divided Societies* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016).
[46] Roger Mac Ginty, 'Everyday Social Practices and Boundary-Making in Deeply Divided Societies', *Civil Wars* 19, no. 1 (2017): 4–25.
[47] Lederach, *Building Peace*.

groups.[48]

Given these features, this study regards South Korea as a deeply divided society, because contemporary forms of civic life are severely divided by different social and political identities between the left and the right. This is closely linked to the ever-present ideological dispute throughout modern history, in which the conflict between two groups was initially formed and intensified before and during the Korean War. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the origin of the conflict is the Japanese colonial regime, dividing Korean people into two segregated groups, and it was extended to an ideological dispute after independence in 1945. During the Korean War, there were civil wars between leftist and rightist groups in South Korea, and the leftists were eliminated by state-sponsored violence. The fractured lines developed throughout the following decades, and significantly influence social and political identity. Today, South Korean citizens do not perform violence towards each other, and yet the social structure thoroughly discriminates against those who were victimized by political violence, stigmatizing them as 'Commies'. The dominant social and political memory and narratives sustain hostile bias and prejudice towards them. Historical records hardly acknowledge the fact of victimization. As a result, people in society are deeply segregated by sociohistorical memory, affecting people's private and public lives.

Narrative as Autobiographical Story-Making

Narrative is another key term that is used throughout this study. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines narrative as "a spoken or written account of connected events; a story."[49] This definition is comparable to a set of organized stories, but narrative is more than a story: it is an act of story making. Story is "a detailed organization of narrative events arranged in a structure based on the order of the beginning, middle and end",[50] and narrative is a kind of organizational scheme expressed in story form through a process and the result of making a story with the teller's cognition of scheming.[51] That is, if story means a full description of lived experience, narrative is a representational description of it.[52] In order for episodes to be a story, narrators need a frame that connects and organizes discursive events, and synthesizes them to make a story. It is a

[48] Guelke, *Politics in Deeply Divided Societies*; Maddison, *Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation*.
[49] John Simpson and Edmund Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
[50] Jeong-Hee Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry: The Crafting and Analysis of Stories as Research* (Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2016), 8.
[51] Donald E. Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).
[52] Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry.*

purposeful creation with personal intention, connecting life events with intended themes or purposes to make sense of the temporal human experience. As Fivush rightly points out,

> Narratives provide a sequential organization that specifies the unfolding of an event along temporal lines, but even more so, narratives provide an explanatory and evaluative framework for understanding how and why events unfold as they do. Narratives move beyond a simple script or chronology to imbue a sequence of actions with causal links that explain why one action follows another, and critically, does so within a folk psychology and interweaves actions in the world with human thoughts, motivations, and emotions. Thus narratives provide an account of what happened that is dense with interpersonal meaning and evaluation.[53]

Understood in this way, there are different forms of the narrative genre, "in myth, legend, fables, tales, short stories, epics, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, pantomime, paintings, stained-glass windows, movies, local news, conversation."[54] It occurs at the political, community, and personal levels such as "in the speeches of leaders, the conversation of a community group, or the telling of an individual life story."[55] Thus, narratives are everywhere, where there is human history. In Barthes' words,

> It is present at all times, in all places, in all societies; indeed narrative starts with the very history of mankind; there is not, there has never been anywhere, any people without narrative; all classes, all human groups, have their stories, and very often those stories are enjoyed by men of different and even opposite cultural background.[56]

Among various different narrative genres, this study focuses on narratives as autobiographical story-making. In this form, it is a representational set of an individual life history.[57] Individuals create a life story by interweaving episodes of past events. They do so by a process of

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[53] Robyn Fivush, 'Speaking Silence: The Social Construction of Silence in Autobiographical and Cultural Narratives', *Memory* 18, no. 2 (2010): 88–98, 89.
[54] Roland Barthes, 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative', *New Literary History* 6, no. 2 (1975): 237–72, 237.
[55] Phillip L. Hammack and Andrew Pilecki, 'Narrative as a Root Metaphor for Political Psychology', *Political Psychology* 33, no. 1 (2012): 75–103, 79.
[56] Barthes, 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative', 237.
[57] Jerome Bruner, *Acts of Meaning: Four Lectures on Mind and Culture*, Reprint edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Jerome Bruner, 'Life as Narrative', *Social Research* 71, no. 3 (2004): 691–710.

remembering these events and selecting what to remember and what to forget. They synthesize heterogeneous incidents and experiences which contain mediation and the competition between succession and configuration.[58] Individuals understand their lives in a plotted story to which they give meanings to the past, present and future.[59] In doing so, individuals find out who they are and how they came to be; thus developing selfhood.[60] This perspective will be developed further in the theoretical chapter.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of three core parts; setting the stage, findings, and conclusion. The first part sets out the thesis. As a social science form of dissertation, this thesis begins with addressing context overview, literature review, theoretical framework, and methodology. The four different chapters offer a theoretical explanation of why the chosen topic is important to research in relation to a broader set of literature, what kind of data is collected, and how it is going to be analyzed. The second part displays research findings. By adopting a narrative form of representation, findings will be explained with my interpretation supported by informants' narratives. There will be three finding chapters, each of which begins with a representative prologue of one or two interviewees' life stories, which portray the core theme of the chapter as a whole. Each prologue introduces the content of the chapter. By organizing the thesis in this way, I try to effectively present categorized themes emerging from participants' stories. The last section concludes the thesis. It sums up the research findings, reflecting on the previous studies.

Chapter 2 offers a contextual background for this research which examines the research questions in the context of South Korea, and the innocent victims of civilian massacres during the Korean War who are the subject of this research. To make sense of the contextual background, in this chapter, I explain the historical background of the mass killing, the political process after the Korean War and governmental attempts to deal with the past, and victims' suffering as a result of different forms of violence. The brief contextual explanation helps in understanding what the Korean state authority and mandated agencies had done wrong to leftist civilians in the war, and how they have lived in the context of suppression.

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[58] Paul Ricoeur, 'Life in Quest of Narrative', in *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative and Interpretation*, ed. David Wood (London; New York: Routledge, 1991); Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume One*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, 1 edition (Chicago, Ill.: University Of Chicago Press, 1984).
[59] Dan P. McAdams, *The Stories We Live by: Personal Myths and the Making of the Self* (New York; London: Guilford Press, 1993).
[60] Dan P. McAdams, 'Personal Narratives and the Life Story', in *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research*, ed. O. P. John, R. W. Robins, and L. A. Pervin (New York: The Guilford Press, 2008), 242–62.

Chapter 3 reviews previous research in relation to the research topic. This research deals with victims' internal processing of endorsing reconciliation in the aftermath of political violence in South Korea. The research topic engages with different bodies of literature, which need a comprehensive review. I divide Chapter 3 into five subsections under the themes of reconciliation and victim issues. To begin with, I introduce some discussions of reconciliation in conventional research. This provides a conceptual clarity of reconciliation in post-conflict or deeply divided societies. Second, I directly review the theme of victim-centeredness in different fields of peace and conflict studies. It includes victim-focused practices in transitional justice, peacebuilding, and peace education. These are closely linked to victim-centered reconciliation. Third, some literature on victims' morality is also reviewed, as scholars tend to theorize victims' behaviors from the perspectives of suffering and morality, critiquing the perspective on the roles of victims after violent conflict. Fourth, I review some victim and reconciliation literature in the context of South Korea. Although there is not much literature on this topic, it does provide a glimpse of the previous discussion on the context. After these reviews, I identify research gaps.

Chapter 4 outlines the research methodology. This chapter justifies a qualitative narrative inquiry, which is built upon philosophies of constructivism and interpretivism, and human experience as ontology and epistemology. Furthermore, this chapter makes sense of a particular approach to theorization and reporting the discovered data – abductive reasoning. By means of this approach, I underpin a particular way of theorizing and representing the research findings, which offers the best inference of research findings via a mutual interaction between theories and findings. After that, I explain some technical issues in the process of collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. In doing so, I consider trustworthiness in the collected data and ethical issues in conducting fieldwork. Methodological limitations are also mentioned.

Chapter 5 provides a theoretical framework. It is an abductively framed set of ideas to explain the research findings. In the first half of the chapter, I introduce some bedrock theories of the narrative self, narrative identity, and autobiographical meaning. These theories found a perspective that victims of political violence are the narrative self, who compose autobiographical narratives in order to make coherence in their lives and to develop intellectuality and subjectivity in their life experiences. Their identities are confirmed and developed while composing their autobiographies, and this affects meaning-making of social values. Based on these theories, I discuss relevant literature to explain the research findings. These works of literature focus on autobiographical meaning-making associated with national, familial, and religious identity.

Chapter 6, 7, and 8 report the research findings. Each chapter describes different results of identity-based narrative reasoning of victims, which is categorized by national, familial and

religious identity and meaning-making, respectively. These chapters have the same form of reporting analysis. To do so, I briefly summarize the theoretical lines from the previous research. Following this, I present outcomes of the structural analysis, that examines emplotment, characters, rhetoric, and coherence of the narrative texts. The structural analysis is exemplified by a representative story. It allows the overall and particular characteristics of the text itself to be understood, and supports the contents of the thematic analysis, which follows. The thematic form of analysis enumerates categorized themes with my interpretation of what each theme would mean in relation to the research questions. In the analysis, victims' understanding of the social world, self-recognition, and meaning of reconciliation are presented. Themes are supported by narrative data, that are carefully selected. After addressing both structural and thematic analyses, I sum up the findings, reflecting on what is reported in each chapter.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. This chapter synthesizes and evaluates the research findings, comparing each chapters' analyses. The study is discussed within a broader range of literature. Through the evaluated reflection, I offer some implications for further research, as well as policies for reconciliation, making the findings generalizable.

Chapter 2
Civilian Massacres and Victims in South Korea

> The victims as well as the offenders may know the truth already. Although known by many, the truth is not being accepted by society. If public power has the duty to protect its people, but instead inflicts undue pain on innocent civilians, then the government must rightfully reconsider its wrongdoings and apply measures to redeem the victims by restoring their honor and by building trust between the people and the state.
>
> Byung-Ook Anh, President of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea, 2009[61]

This chapter provides the contextual background of this study. This study investigates victims' autobiographical narratives of experiencing civilian massacres as a form of political violence during the Korean War. It necessitates a contextual explanation as to how politically justified civilian massacres were carried out during the War, and social and political discrimination has since been bought to bear on victims in the form of structural violence. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section describes the historical background of the massacres that took place in the southern territory of the Korean Peninsula during the Korean War. It clarifies that the War was twofold in the Korean Peninsula: a war between North Korea and South Korea and a civil war between rightists and leftists in South Korea. Second, political developments and efforts to deal with the past wrongs in each administration after the War will be discussed. The last section depicts varying degrees of victims' suffering. As suffering includes not just physical outcomes from wounds inflicted on victims, but is a societal product of social, political, and cultural discrimination towards a particular group, context-related dimensions of victims' suffering will be explored.

2.1 A History of Civilian Massacres during the Korean War

South Korea, also known as the Republic of Korea (ROK), is a Northeast Asian country, located in

[61] Ahn, 'Truth and Reconciliation'.

the southern part of the Korean Peninsula. South Korea is one of two Korean states, with North Korea, or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), after the ceasefire of the Korean War agreed on July 27, 1953. Since the War, the ROK has undergone a long process of establishing democracy. The political process towards democracy was characterized by ruthless state violence and victimization of its citizens.[62] Autocratic state powers such as the dictatorship (1961-1979) and a military government (1980-1987) exhibited the violent process of political transition from oppressive regimes to democracy. During several decades of state-sponsored violence, South Korean citizens experienced and suffered from politically legitimized coercive power.

Compared to other cases, civilian massacres in the Korean War present the greatest degree of organized state-led political violence towards its citizens. For several months following June 25, 1950, innocent civilians who were suspected of being communists and the traitors in the southern part of Korea were silently yet systematically slaughtered at the hands of official security forces and right-wing groups because of their engagement with communist activities. While the armed forces were fighting their North Korean People's Army (KPA) enemies on the battlefield, the governmental authority commanded official forces to carry out a political project, killing leftists, those who were suspected and Communist collaborators.[63]

Before the War (1945-1950)

After thirty-five years of the Japanese colonial regime (1910-1945), the Korean people achieved independence and entered into a new stage of their history from August 15, 1945. The independence situation was marked by an ideological dispute and state-building processes in both the northern and southern parts of Korea. From independence to the Korea War, the social and political situations on the Korean Peninsula significantly changed both at international and national levels.

After Japan's unconditional surrender in 1945, the United States (the U.S.) and the Soviet Union established military governments on the southern and the northern parts of the peninsula respectively based on the 38th parallel. By the Joint Soviet-American Commission, both military powers declared a plan for trusteeship in the name of support for the establishment of a provisional government in the Korean Peninsula.[64] The plan, however, caused differing opinions

[62] Dong-Jin Kim, *The Korean Peace Process and Civil Society: Towards Strategic Peacebuilding*, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Dong-Choon Kim, *Politics of War* (Seoul: Gil, 2013).
[63] Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War* (New York: Modern Library, 2010); Bernd Stöver, *Geschichte Des Koreakriegs*, trans. Hwang Eunmi (Seoul: Yeomoonchaek, 2016); Kim, *War and Society*.
[64] Byung-Joon Jung, *Collision at the 38 Parallel and the Formation of the War* (Paju: Dolbaegae, 2006); Byung-Joon Jung, 'The 38 Parallel Policy and the Origin of the North-South Conflict', in *The Korea War: A Historical Perspective*, ed. Yong-

and violent conflict between the Korean people, resulting in its withdrawal. In the meantime, as the 'Issue of the Korean Peninsula' was unlikely to be solved by agreements between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the U.S. proposed to expand the discussion of the issue in four-way talks including the U.S., the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and China and to build legislative bodies in the North and the South. The Soviet Union immediately objected to this proposal because the expanded talks infringed the agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and the separated provisional governments could cause a permanent division between the Korean people.[65] Despite this objection, the U.S. transferred the Korean issue to the United Nations on September 23, 1947. The UN created United Nations' Temporary Commission of Korea on November 14, 1947, according to the U.S.'s proposal for the establishment of the Korean government and the parliament through free elections across the peninsula under the Commission's supervision, and withdrawal of the U.S. and the Soviet Union until March 1948. Because the Soviet Union refused entry to the North by the Commission, the Commission approved a general election only where available. With this approval, the southern part from the 38th parallel conducted an election on May 10, 1948, and declared the Republic of Korea on August 15, 1948. Not long after the ROK's declaration of the establishment of its government, the North also established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on September 9, 1948.[66]

At the national level, the sudden, yet expected, independence instigated a vigorous ideological dispute between rightists and leftists in the Korean population.[67] Within the southern part of the peninsula, friction between these factions developed into a national phenomenon, and this ideological confrontation mobilized ordinary people to be hostile towards political others.[68] Under this situation, Rhee Syngman, the first president of South Korea, commanded the official force to monitor, arrest, and even kill civilians who had followed the communist ideology, regarding them as political opponents in the name of building liberal democracy in the southern part of the peninsula.[69] Rhee organized a political project of Red Hunting to arrest, detain, and kill innocent civilians who were suspected of being communists by enacting the National Security Law (NSL), aimed at communist or suspects in December 1948. By the law, leftist civilians on the island of Jeju who objected to the trusteeship and were worried about the division between the North and the South were massacred around April 3, 1948. Similar civilian killings occurred in other regions in the same year. In the independent political environment, the ideological dispute

Yook Jung (Seoul: Humanist, 2010), 45–74.
[65] Man-Gil, Kang, Revised Modern History of South Korea (Paju: Changbi, 1994).
[66] Jung, *Collision at the 38 Parallel and the Formation of the War*.
[67] Cumings, *The Korean War*; Jung, *Collision at the 38 Parallel and the Formation of the War*; Jung, *The Korean War*; Stöver, *Geschichte Des Koreakriegs*.
[68] Sung-Hun Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog* (Seoul: Humanitas, 2014); Jung, *Collision at the 38 Parallel and the Formation of the War*; Jung, 'The 38 Parallel Policy and the Origin of the North-South Conflict'.
[69] Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*; Jung, *The Korean War*; Kim, *War and Society*.

was intensified, and political violence was enacted in the southern part of the peninsula.

The Korean War (1950-1953)

The Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950, when the KPA invaded the ROK. The War lasted thirty-seven months and ended on July 27, 1953 with a ceasefire agreed among the U.S. representing the United Nations Command, the DPRK, and China. The War had resulted in approximately 4 million casualties, of which half were civilians.[70] The course of the War can be divided into four or five phases. The first phase refers to the KPA's occupation of the ROK until September 15, 1950, when the Battle of Inchon was conducted. The KPA seized Seoul, the capital of the ROK, within three days of the start of hostilities. Until September 1950, the KPA occupied most of the territory of South Korea, except some cities in the south-east. The second phase was the counterattack of U.S. forces and the Republic of Korean Army (ROKA) in the victory of the Battle of Inchon and their advance to the Yalu River located at the north-western border between the DPRK and China. In this phase, both forces recaptured Seoul on September 28, 1950, which is called 'the 9.28 Seoul Recovery', and occupied extensive territory of the DPRK, including Pyongyang, on October 19. The third stage of the War was marked by the intervention of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army and the retreat of the U.S. forces and the ROKA. Due to the Chinese army's interference, the probability of the end of the War and the unification of the Peninsula were miscarried, and the frontline was moved back through Seoul on April 1, 1951. On March 14, 1951, the U.N. forces recovered Seoul again. On June 23, 1951, a ceasefire was proposed by the Soviet U.N. representative, Adam Malik and agreed by Harry Truman, the U.S. President. However, talks for a ceasefire dragged on and broke down due to the need to manage the vast numbers of prisoners and Rhee Syngman's refusal "to sign any armistice that would keep Korea divided."[71] At the same time, both sides were engaged in the war of attrition around the 38th parallel. The Korean Armistice Agreement was finally signed by representatives of the U.S. Army, the UN Command, the KPA, and the Chinese People's Volunteer Army on June 27, 1953, whilst the South Korean government refused to sign the agreement.

[70] Cumings, *The Korean War*; Jung, *The Korean War*; Myung-Lim Park, 'The Course of the Korean War', in *Studies on the Korean War*, ed. Jang-Jip Choi (Seoul: Taeam, 1990), 85–130; Stöver, *Geschichte Des Koreakriegs*.
[71] Cumings, *The Korean War,* 31.

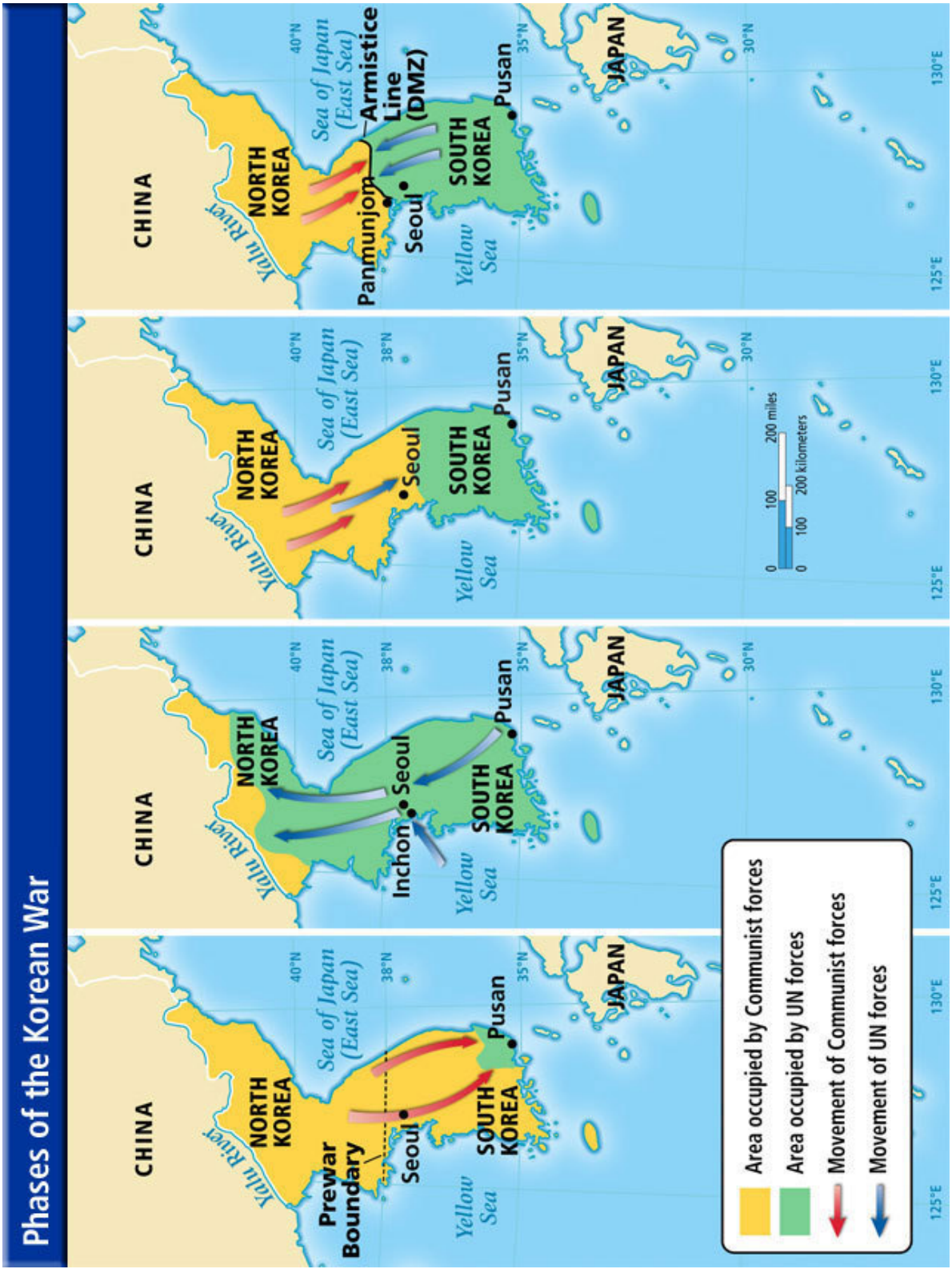

Figure 2.1. Map of Phases of the Korean War[72]

[72] Source available at https://www.mapmania.org/map/60462/phases_of_the_korean_war_1950-1953

Civilian Massacres during the War

Although the Korean War started and developed as an international confrontation between democratic and communistic blocs in the Korean Peninsula as part of the Cold War, for the Korean civilians, both North and South, it was an experience of radicalized state-led political violence.[73] Within the ROK, war crimes were committed against those civilians who were identified or suspected of being communist.[74] The official forces secretly yet systematically massacred those civilians within the ROK under the state-organized radicalized policy of anti-communism, based on the NSL. As soon as the War broke out, the official forces started to track down, arrest, and execute those civilians who (1) identified themselves as communists, (2) had previously followed leftism and had been involved in communist activities, and (3) helped the KPA when they occupied the ROK.[75] By this act, leftists and suspected innocent citizens were observed and killed at the hands of policemen, soldiers, and rightist neighbors who joined rightist youth groups such as the Korea Youth Group and Boy's organization. Organized state-led violence towards civilians as a form of civil war had already been carried out even before the War in Jeju Island and elsewhere, and this developed intensely during the War into nationwide mass killings. In these massacres, hundreds of thousands of leftists and suspected civilians were arrested and exterminated from June 28, 1950 to the first half of 1951.[76]

Massacres as State-led Violence

The civilian massacres were a form of state-led political violence. In most historians' view, civilian massacres were politically justified genocidal events that aimed to wipe out political opponents, thereby creating a democratic state in the southern part of the peninsula.[77] Choi has underlined that the Rhee Syngman administration's political justification for killing civilians was conformity

[73] I have to clarify that this thesis only deals with civilian massacre during the Korean War in the ROK. It also must be noted that mass killing of civilians in the War occurred both in the DPRK and the ROK. In the North, the KPA killed rightists or the ROKA and the U.S. forces killed leftists in the second phase of the War. There were also civilian massacre in the South, rightist civilians were also killed by the KPA when they occupied the ROK in the beginning of the War. Thus, there were multidimensional aspects of civilian massacres during the War. Regarding the complexity, this thesis limits its scope only to leftists and suspected civilians killed by South Korean official forces due to the anti-communism policy however. For more, see, Ki-Jin Kim, *The Korea War and Mass Killing* (Seoul: Purun Yeoksa, 2005); Shin-Cheol Lee, 'Civilian Massacre in North Korea During the Korea War', in *The Korea War: A Historical Perspective*, ed. Yong-Yook Jung (Seoul: Humanist, 2010), 505–36; TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol 1' (Seoul, 2010).
[74] Ki-Cheol Shin, *War Crime in Korea* (Goyang: Human rights & Peace Foundation, 2015); Kim, *War and Society*; Cumings, *The Korean War*; Kim, *The Korea War and Mass Killing*.
[75] Kim, *War and Society*; TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol.3' (Seoul: 2010).
[76] Kim, *War and Society*; Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*; Joong-Seok Seo, *Modern History of South Korea 2* (Seoul: Owaluibom, 2015); Stöver, *Geschichte Des Koreakriegs*; Jung, *The Korean War*.
[77] Jung-Gie Choi, 'State Violence in the Formation of Nation-State: Focusing on the Genocide In the Gurye Province since 1948', *Society and History* 68 (2005): 6–36; Kim, *War and Society*; Kim, *The Korea War and Mass Killing*; TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol.3'.

to the American foreign policy that aimed to expand the American democratic regime in Northeast Asia, protecting South Korea from the threat posed by the communist bloc by eliminating the 'Reds' or 'Commies' within the state in the name of state-building.[78] Political authorities utilized mass killing to build a new democratic state and solidify national identity by eliminating non-citizens.[79] For this purpose, the Rhee administration prepared to legitimize frameworks. As soon as Seoul fell, Rhee firstly declared 'special action' to bring civilians under control of the government and to enable a sentence of death for any criminal act.[80] This action ignored the existing criminal law and the legal procedures of arrest and detention. The government also declared the 'detention of impure elements' and martial law on June 29, 1950 and August 7, 1950 respectively.[81] Under these autocratic legal frameworks, leftists and the suspected civilians were monitored, arrested, detained, and killed. Moreover, the NSL mobilized official forces such as punitive forces, militia, military police, Young Men's Associations to capture, torture, and kill nominated and suspected political opponents as well as their whole family.[82] There were three different types of mass killings: Bodo League massacres, prisoners massacres, and collaborators and suspected traitors massacres.[83]

Bodo League Massacres

Before the War, an interest group, National Guidance Alliance or '*Bodo League*', was formed in the name of protection and guidance for those who were influenced by communism.[84] Established in April 1949, the League aimed to re-educate those who were influenced by communistic ideals.[85] Bodo League members consisted of (a) political criminals, (b) ex-convicts, (c) those opposing national ideology, and (d) communist surrenders.[86] The League offered membership to people because they committed to the NSL by participating in communist activities or were influenced by the ideology. Members of the League were meant to conform their thought and behavior to

[78] Tae-Yook Choi, 'A Study of Relationship between the Civilian Victimization and Korean Christianity in the Age of the National Division and Korean War (1945-1953)' (Taejeon, Mokwon University, 2015).
[79] Jung-Gie Choi, 'The Civilians' Suffering in the Period of Korean War and the Demarcation between Citizen and Non-Citizen', Journal of Modern Social Science, 14 (2010): 81–101.
[80] Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Kim, *War and Society*; Chan-Seung Park, *The Korean War in Villages* (Paju: Dolbaegae, 2010).
[83] Beside the three types of massacres, there was one more sort of killing towards South Korean civilians, which was done by the U.S. Air Forces. The U.S. Air Forces operated bombings to some targeted areas where a considerable number of innocent civilians lived nearby. According to a report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission, although the bombings were legitimate military operations during the wartime, the U.S. Forces did not carefully avoid but targeted the vicinity of civilian villages, resulting in deaths of a number of vulnerable women and children. See, TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol. 1'; Hee-Kyung Suh, 'Atrocities Before and During the Korean War: Mass Civilian Killings by South Korean and U.S. Forces', *Critical Asian Studies* 42, no. 4 (2010): 553–88.
[84] Kim, *The Korea War and Mass Killing*.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Kim, *War and Society*.

Bodo Guidelines, by which prosecutors judged and classified the members as grade A (execution), B (suspension for execution), and C (release). When the war broke out, however, members of the group started to be killed without the legitimate legal proceeding.[87]

Political Prisoners Massacres

Another group of people targeted for killing were political prisoners. On the charge of infringing the NSL, the government arrested political prisoners and executed them as soon as the KPA moved forward to the south. Eighty percent of the inmates in eighteen national prisons during the War were violators of the NSL because of their communist activities.[88] Prisoners were killed without due process of law. Massacres of political prisoners fall into three groups: killing political inmates arrested before the War, killing Bodo League members arrested by preventive custody after the War, and inmates' deaths resulting from cruel treatment and torture in regional prisons.[89]

Pro-Communist Collaborators and the Suspected Massacres

After the 9.28 Seoul Recovery in 1950, the official forces started killing collaborators or suspected traitors of the KPA soldiers or North Korean partisans, branding them as collaborators. They were mostly citizens who had dealing with or helped the KPA. During the KPA's occupation of most of the territory of the ROK, the KPA installed communist organizations in every village, and also executed those who were rightist intelligentsia, pro-Japanese, landowners and Christians.[90] In the first three months, villagers, directly and indirectly, helped the KPA or participated in some level of communistic education because of the KPA's threats and propaganda. After the 9.28 Seoul Recovery, the official forces arrested and executed those who collaborated or were suspected as traitors. The collaborator and suspected massacres were the most extensive type of killing.

[87] Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*; Choi, 'A Study of Relationship between the Civilian Victimization and Korean Christianity in the Age of the National Division and Korean War (1945-1953)'.
[88] TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol. 1'.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Cumings, *The Korean War*; Tae-Yook Choi, Hyung-Jung Park, and Seok-Lee Hyun, *A White Paper on Civilian Massacre in Tae-An*, Unification, History, and Culture 2 (Inchon: Jakgadeul, 2018); Park, *The Korean War in Villages*.

Figure 2.2. Suspected South Korean Traitors Headed for Execution[91]

[91] This image is not copyrighted by the author. Source available at https://nl.pinterest.com/pin/196258496237459644/

Massacres as Revengeful Local Conflict

The civilian massacres practiced under the political justification were a type of social conflict, triggered by an antagonistic relationship and retributive emotion between rightist and leftist villagers.[92] It refers to mass killing which was a result of local conflict between rightists and leftists villagers with negative emotions towards each other. Even before the War, there had been severe conflict between villagers, and the War enabled people to conduct violent acts towards local enemies.[93] During the War, varying degrees of local dispute developed into violent strife between the ideologically segregated local people. When the KPA occupied the ROK, the KPA organized the People's Committee at each village and governed villagers by leftists. At this time, local leftists discriminated against or sometimes killed local rightists. After the 9.28 Recovery, however, when the ROK official forces started killing leftists and suspected communist sympathizers, local rightists performed acts of revenge on those who supported the KPA and were associated with the People's Committee under the authorized power. Local rightists accused their enemies or anyone with whom they were in a negative relationship, branding them as collaborators. Thus, while official forces killed the suspected in the name of a political project to build the nation as a liberal democracy, innocent civilians were accused and killed owing to personal emotions and negative relationships with their rightist neighbors. Sociologists have found this aspect of killing in civilian massacres, and yet it is undeniable that the political form of violence allowed this to take place. Thus, although local conflicts were performed by the direct and indirect retributive acts of villagers who used the War as an opportunity for revenge, they were conducted under a political allowance for the formation of democratic state-building.

2.2 Political Development and Efforts for Dealing with the Past

This section describes the political development of South Korea as a democratic state after the War, and how the legacies of the War have shaped the protracted intrastate level of conflict within the society. This will make clear how and why surviving and bereaved family members of the deceased in the civilian massacres have had to undergo varying degrees of discrimination, which will be explored in the next section.

Since the War ended in 1953, South Korean society has experienced a long and painful process to achieve democracy. In the meantime, the society has witnessed more state-led violence against a

[92] Park, *The Korean War in Villages*; Kim, *War and Society*; Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*; Choi, Park, and Hyun, *A White Paper on Civilian Massacre in Tae-An*.
[93] Park, *The Korean War in Villages*.

vast number of innocent civilians throughout dictatorships, military regimes, and prior to the democratization process in the 1980s.[94] Over the process, this society has had to face a rapid escalation of intra-state conflict marked by political strife between the left and the right wing emerging from the War and the division. The political dispute has been protracted and has segregated citizens intensely along with the political blocs, creating conflictual historical memories and interpretations and consolidating divided identities within the citizens. Under these political development, those who were victimized during the Korean War had continually been suppressed by the social and political structure that excludes and demonizes leftists.

Efforts for settling the violent past began early. Not long after the War, a victim-led movement emerged for restitution, restoring honor, and truth-finding emerged, in order to settle the unjust past and wrongdoings. However, such efforts and victims had been suppressed by state authorities throughout the autocratic regimes. It was not until the establishment in 1996 of Kim Young-Sam's administration, the first democratic government, that efforts for dealing with past injustices were legitimized and supported by the government. Since then, with growing attention from academics, activists, and the public, the issues of civilian massacres have been addressed by successive democratic governments, resulting in the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2005.

The Fall of Rhee Syngman

The political situation in the years immediately after the War were dominated by President Rhee Syngman and the Liberal Party that was established in 1951 under presidential power. Rhee maintained his presidency until 1960 with the support of the Liberal Party. By amending the constitution of the election system from indirect to direct presidential election in 1952 and removing the two four-year term limit for the presidency in 1954, Rhee enjoyed autocratic supremacy over his political opponents.[95] In his regime, the Rhee government and his party fortified the narratives of anti-communism, labelling his political opponents as communists.[96] His presidency came to an end when he planned his fourth term in the presidential election on March 15, 1960, with his illegal intervention. Public protests against his autocracy arose and spread throughout the country, centering around university and high school students. Although the national police violently suppressed the protesters, the student-led demonstrations against the

[94] Ahn, 'Truth and Reconciliation'.
[95] Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-Century Odyssey* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 122; Adrian Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002).
[96] Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea,* 106.

corruption of the Rhee government reached a peak on April 19, 1960. The April 19 Revolution achieved the replacement of the first government by the Democratic Party, led by Chang Myon as the prime minister.

From Authoritative Regimes to Democracy

After the corruption of the Rhee government, South Korea came under a long period of political dictatorship initiated by the military coup d'état on May 16, 1961, led by Park Jung-Hee. Subverting the Chang Myon government (1960-1961), Park Jung-Hee and the military forces seized the country in the name of stabilizing South Korean politics and building a strengthened anti-communist state.[97] In the beginning, the Park revolution was welcomed by most citizens, who were skeptical of the Western style of democracy that Rhee Syngman imported, and who hoped for a betterment of the political situation.[98] However, this military regime soon turned into the most repressive regime in modern South Korean history, exercising extreme military force.

In the first half of his regime, Park Jung-Hee controlled the country by establishing the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) and reinforcing the NSL. Park maximized the KCIA's operating power to intervene in domestic politics and to monitor, arrest, and torture ordinary citizens as well as military personnel who were against the government within and outside the state.[99] In the second half, he proclaimed the Yushin (revitalizing reform) system in 1972, in order to legitimize his power to revise the constitution. By the Yushin constitution, Park was able to retain his power for a longer-term, not having further elections. Within the Yushin system, Park issued emergency measure to enable "security forces to detain civilians and confiscate their property without a warrant, punish arrested persons without a judicial trial, and arbitrarily close down schools and civil organizations.[100]

In his dictatorship, a vast number of citizens disappeared or died suspiciously.[101] By means of ruthless state violence, Park and the KCIA attempted to implant a 'red complex' in people's minds, utilizing the situation of national division between the North and South and branding anti-government persons as spies or Communists.[102] A large number of demonstrations by students,

[97] Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-Century Odyssey*.
[98] Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea: From the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), p 181-2.
[99] Seth.
[100] Sang-Bum Han, 'A Hard Journey to Justice: The First Term Report by the Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths of the Republic of Korea' (Seoul: Samin Books, 2004), 37.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid, 37

university professors, religious leaders, and journalists took place. His popularity was decreasing by the end of 1979, and his dictatorship came to an end when he was assassinated by his bodyguard on October 26, 1979.

Following the Yushin ruling system, South Korea confronted another military coup led by Chun Doo-Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo on December 12, 1979. Chun Doo-Hwan, a former military elite during the Park government, declared the Fifth Republic on May 1980. Chun's autocracy systematically ruled the country. By proclaiming martial law on May 17, 1980 and enacting the Basic Press Law in December, 1980, he controlled not only political gatherings and public criticism of the government but also publications and broadcasting programs.[103] Through the police, prosecution authorities, and the Military Security Command, Chun thoroughly regulated civilians, politicians, human rights activists, journalists, and academics by engaged surveillance and investigations.[104] His military forces ruthlessly arrested, detained, tortured, and killed those who opposed the government, just as the previous ruling power had done, branding them as communists and suppressing innocent civilians.

His repressive regime resulted in a fierce backlash from the South Korean people nationwide. In particular, in May 1980, students and academics centering around Chonnam National University in Gwangju city demanded the end of martial law and the release of Kim Dae-Jung. Chun utilized extreme state violence of the Special Forces to oppress the backlash and to seize and isolate the city from the rest of the country. Within the May 18 Gwangju People's Uprising for democracy (or Gwangju Massacre), the ruling military forces killed hundreds of innocent people.[105] The Gwangju massacre triggered other forms of grassroots movements, including the labor movements, which led the course of postwar Korean politics towards democracy.[106]

Despite violent suppression, the student-centered demonstrations for the end of the repressive regime gained greater public attention. The Chun government attempted to diminish the growing recognition of, and participation in, democratization movements, denouncing the protesters as 'pro-North Korea' and 'pro-communist'.[107] Between 1984 and 1986, public attention had rapidly grown, whereas state violence became more and more ruthless. In 1987, hundreds of thousands of ordinary citizens came to the streets to fight against Chun's forces. In the end, the people's struggle forced Chun Doo-Hwan to concede his power to Roh Tae-Woo on June 29, 1987. By announcing the June 29 Statement, Roh promised citizens a direct election for the next presidency.

[103] Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*.
[104] Han, 'A Hard Journey to Justice'.
[105] For the official number and cases of Gwangju Massacre, see Ibid.
[106] Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-Century Odyssey*.
[107] Han, 'A Hard Journey to Justice'.

This declaration was a turning point in the South Korean people's long struggle for democracy, which was gained by popular demand.

Democratic Governments

Roh Tae-Woo was elected as the new president via a direct election in December 1987. His regime represents a transitional step from autocracy to democracy in South Korean modern history.[108] Nonetheless, the operating system of the Roh government was taken over from the previous regime including strict government control of the banking and financial system, a repressive attitude to the organization of labour and enforcement of the National Security Law aiming at North Korean subversion and surveillance of internal leftists.[109]

South Korean democracy began when the Kim Young-Sam government was established in 1993 for a strict term. Kim's presidency was initiated with increased public hope for the transformation of South Korean politics. Kim Yong-Sam reconstructed the KCIA to reduce domestic surveillance and attempted to significantly restore the civil rights of dissidents. [110] Although the Kim government forced several major challenges, including the International Monetary Fund crisis during the second half of his presidency, he was the first president to settle the violent past.

Two subsequent democratic governments were established in 1998 and 2003, respectively. From 1998 to 2008, South Korea witnessed a stabilization of democracy. Kim Dae-Jung, a former political activist for democracy during the repressive regimes, was elected as the new president in 1997. During his presidency, Kim attempted to develop democratic politics by building the "politics of mutual survival" with his political opponents within South Korea on the one hand, and transform the hostile relationship with North Korea on the other.[111] For his attempts to improve the relationship with Kim Jung-Il and the Sunshine policy to address North Korean poverty, Kim Dae-Jung was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. In 2002, Roh Moo-Hyun, a former human rights lawyer, was elected as the next president. His victory was attributed to most citizens' aspirations for social justice and institutional reforms. The Roh administration was filled with numerous social activists, resulting in the advancement of human rights in different social sectors. Roh Moo-Hyun, amongst other presidents, enthusiastically took transformative steps to come to terms with the violent past and to promote social cohesion through reconciliation with the past. In 2004, Roh spoke about the necessity for a comprehensive settlement of past injustice, and in

[108] Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*.
[109] Buzo, 162.
[110] Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-Century Odyssey*.
[111] Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*.

2005, the National Assembly passed and enacted the Basic Act for Coping with Past History for Truth and Reconciliation.[112]

Clearing up Past Wrongdoings before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea

The fall of Rhee Syngman's administration in the people's revolution in April 19, 1960, triggered various social and labour movements, including the creation of the National Association of Bereaved Families for the Victims of Massacres and regional Bereaved Family Associations (BFA).[113] Since 1960, a vast number of surviving and bereaved family members of mass killings during the War have publicly demanded the truth through these associations. The first attempt was made on May 23, 1960, when members of the Fourth National Assembly enacted a resolution that established the Special Investigation Commission on the Truth of Innocent Civilian Massacre Incidents. Inquiring into the province of Gyeongsang, South Jeolla and Jeju from May 31 to June 10, 1960, the special investigation team reported that about 8,715 innocent civilians were slaughtered during the War in the three provinces.[114] Before and after the short-lived commission's activity, various events including collective mourning services and excavation of the remains of the massacred across the country were conducted by regional BFAs as an expression of bereavement and resistance.[115]

These 1960 efforts to settle the past, however, were discouraged in successive governments.[116] Chang Myon (1960-1961) took a lukewarm attitude to further investigation, and Park Chung-Hee (1961-1979) suppressed the victim-led movement of dealing with the past. The KCIA started arresting and killing those who were engaged in communist acts and the bereaved families of the massacred during the War by declaring the Special Act on Punishment of Special Crimes on June 22 1961. Numerous leaders and members of the BFA were sentenced to imprisonment and death, and some graves and gravestones were destroyed.[117] The Park administration tried to consolidate the anti-communist nation, just as Rhee Syngman had done, by thoroughly excluding the bereaved families from the national project.[118] Therefore, since this treatment of the bereaved families

[112] Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission'.
[113] TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol 1'; Brendan Wright, 'Raising the Korean War Dead: Bereaved Family Associations and the Politics of 1960-2961 South Korea', *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13, no. 41 (2015): 1–19.
[114] TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol. 1'.
[115] Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*.
[116] Kim, 'The Long Road Toward Truth and Reconciliation'.
[117] TRCK, Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol 1'.
[118] Han, *Gamyeongwonlyeog*; Dong-Jin Lee, 'The Boundaries between "Citizens" and "Non-Citizens": A Case of "Korean War-Bereaved Association Incidents"', *Society and History* 101, no. 101 (2014).

under Park regime, efforts for dealing with the past were delayed until the late 1980s.

Since 1980, public recognition of dealing with the past has grown. The May 18 Gwangju People's Uprising in 1980 and the June 10 Struggle in 1987 motivated people's awareness of human rights abuses and the suspicious deaths of innocent citizens during the democratization process. In Roh Tae-Woo's government, the National Assembly conducted 17 public hearings to attempt to discover the truth about the Gwangju massacres from 1988 to 1989. During the Kim Young-Sam administration, the National Assembly enacted the Gwangju 5.18 Special Act in 1995. By this Act, two former presidents, Chun Doo-Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo, were imprisoned in the name of military rebellion and were granted amnesty in 1997. In 1996, the Geochang Special Act for Geochang Massacre, as the first official investigation dealing with civilian massacres during the Korean War, was legislated.[119] In 2000, the Kim Dae-Jung administration and the National Assembly legislated Jeju 4.3 Special Act for Investigating the Jeju April 3 Incident and Recovering the Honor of Victims and the Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths of the Republic of Korea during military rules from 1960 to 1980.[120] Kim Dae-Jung's effort was extended to the Roh Moo-Hyun government. During Roh's regime, the Special Act on No Gun Ri massacre was enacted in 2004, and the Framework Act for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was accepted by the members of the National Assembly on May 31, 2005, aiming at a comprehensive settlement of past wrongdoing for reconciliation and social cohesion.[121]

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea (2005-2010)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea (TRCK) was established in 2005 to come to terms with South Korea's unjust and violent past from 1910 until 1987, and had a five-year mandate. Based on the Basic Act for Coping with Past History for Truth and Reconciliation and the resulting Framework Act, the TRCK aimed to investigate past wrongs during the Japanese occupation, the Korean War, and repressive regimes. Adopting the South African TRC model, the TRCK aimed to bring about reconciliation and to contribute to national unity by comprehensively uncovering the historical truth.[122]

The TRCK discovered the truth based on petitions from the applicants. There were applications for 11,175 cases, and about 75 percent of the overall petitions (8,206) were related to mass killing

[119] TRCK, Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol 1'.
[120] Han, 'A Hard Journey to Justice'.
[121] Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission'.
[122] See the Framework Act. Available at at https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/ROL/Framework_Act.pdf

in the Korean War.[123] Despite the dominant cases, the number of petitions related to civilian massacres is minimal considering the scale of damage in civilian massacres. The TRCK is often evaluated as a successful political attempt to settle past state-led mass killing, in that it outlined the full scale of civilian massacres and nominated some perpetrators, in particular those of the Bodo League massacre.[124] Reparations have, to some extent, been paid to those who are acknowledged as victims in written judgements. By means of these political activities, public recognition of victims, including the deceased and the surviving and bereaved family members, has grown.

While the TRCK was the most comprehensive governmental body which publicized civilian massacres during the Korean War, it experienced some setbacks to achieving justice, truth, and reconciliation, however. First, the TRCK had a significantly limited right to require legal responsibility by offenders for their wrongdoings. According to the Framework Act, there was no statement of summoning and investigating former perpetrators. As Kim Dong-Choon, the former standing member of the committee, explained, it was because former offenders and their descendants exerted their powers in the conservative bloc in South Korean politics, and so the President and the ruling party had to compromise with conservative parties to pass the Framework Act in the National Assembly.[125] The narrowed authority resulted in the limited scope of criminal justice. Second, the meaning of the truth was not manifested. As to finding the truth, the Framework Act offered a limited sense of the truth; forensic truth.[126] This type of truth allowed the commissioners to collect the minimum quantity of data to verify the truth of a specific event. This limited aspect of the truth hindered revealing the structure of violence and achieving restorative or corrective justice.[127] Third, reconciliation was scarcely achieved. Under the Framework Act, the TRCK created the Reconciliation Committee to provide measures for reconciliation. The Committee proposed recommendations such as state apology, reparation, memorial services and building a memorial park, and yet the recommendations had no legal authority to require succeeding governments and local government to comply with the Committee's recommendations.

2.3 Victims and Suffering

The last section of this chapter portrays the sufferings of victims, addressing varying degrees of

[123] TRCK, 'Final Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vol. 1', 32.
[124] Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission'.
[125] Ibid,105.
[126] Suh, 'Truth and Reconciliation in South Korea; Kim, 'The Long Road Toward Truth and Reconciliation.
[127] Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission', 106.

direct and indirect harm inflicted on them as a result of civilian massacres. The estimated number of those deceased in the violence is in the hundreds of thousands, according to the official TRCK report.[128] Yet, the number of victims significantly increases under the broad definition of victims as 'surviving and bereaved family members', as proposed in Chapter 1.

Describing victims' suffering identifies what life experiences they have endured since the war ended. Although suffering is a universal phenomenon, where human dignity and rights are severely violated, it is a social product in that particular groups of people are discriminated against and their descendants suffer from the inherited traumatic social memory and grievance.[129] As the TRCK report stated, "the victims' pain and suffering have been passed to their descendants who faced various forms of social discrimination and prejudice."[130] Thus, suffering should be understood with regard to the social contexts that create sufferers and maintain their pain.

While victims' suffering is recognized as a social product, it needs to be understood with diverse notions of violence, which Galtung theorized as direct, structure, and cultural forms of violence.[131] To make sense of it, civilian massacres, undoubtedly, are direct violence. Innocent civilians were killed and tortured, and they have suffered from physical and psychological damages throughout their lives as a result of the violence. Victims of the direct violence also had to endure discriminations against them under the political structure with anti-communism policy. By the Anticommunist Law and the National Security Law, the surviving and bereaved family members had to be continuously monitored by official forces. The structural form of violence, moreover, was maintained and reproduced by the culture of social stigmatization. Social stigma was the cultural and symbolic fetter that dehumanized victims with images of communists. Owning to the stigma, victims had to remain as outsiders of society, living silently. Different accounts of violence and suffering are described below in detail.

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[128] Ahn, 'Truth and Reconciliation'.

[129] Allan Young, 'Suffering and the Origins of Traumatic Memory', in *Social Suffering*, ed. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997), 245–60; Paul Farmer, 'On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below', in *Social Suffering*, ed. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1998), 261–84. Marie Breen-Smyth, 'The Uses of Suffering: Victims as Moral Beacons or Icons of Grievance', in *The Politics of Victimhood in Post-Conflict Societies: Comparative and Analytical Perspectives*, ed. Vincent Druliolle and Roddy Brett (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 211–37.

[130] Ahn, 'Truth and Reconciliation', 75.

[131] For Galtung's theory of violence, see Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, and Development and Civilization* (Oslo: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1996); Johan Galtung, 'Cultural Violence', Journal of Peace Research, 27, no.3 (1990): 291-305; Kathleen M. Weigert, 'Structural Violence' in *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace & Conflict* ed. Lester Kurtz (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2008).

Physical and Psychological Damage

The first kind of suffering with which victims of political violence struggle is physical and psychological wounds. First, a vast number of victims who survived and lost their family members during the civilian massacres experienced physical violence. The official forces and mandated rightist groups, for example, tortured the political opponents and their family members. While detaining leftists in ice or rice storage or police substations, they beat and tortured the captured.[132] Police officers and rightists sought, interrogated, and tortured family members of the leftists, many of whom became physically disabled. In some cases, survivors had to witness the killing of their family members. Moreover, local rightists physically harassed the leftist survivors. Sexual abuse was also a common phenomenon.[133] Widows of leftists had to become concubines to those who offended against their husbands. In local storages, leftists were sometimes forced to commit incest.

Second, there is no doubt that the horrendous event of mass killing caused the surviving and bereaved family members to experience negative psychological effects. That is to say, most victims, to a greater or lesser extent, suffer from psychological conditions such as mental disorders and chronic trauma.[134] TRCK's Psychological Damage Report provides clear symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in victims of mass killing during the Korean War.[135] Recent statistics show that about 96.6 percent of the surviving and bereaved family members have experienced psychological trauma and pain, and 23.1 percent suffer from ongoing PTSD.[136] For example, survivors who were arrested, threatened and tortured by armed forces, police officers, and local rightists are living with traumatic memories. The families of the deceased continue to struggle with a mental shock. Such psychological illness results in negative forms of life for victims, such as chronic life stress, low self-esteem, and negative personality. In many cases, the bereaved family members, especially parents of the dead, died from a heart attack or committed suicide due to emotional instability as a result of anger or bitterness.[137]

Multigenerational Stigmatization

[132] Ki-Cheol Shin, *Truth and State Crime* (Seoul: Jari, 2011).
[133] Ibid.
[134] Hong-Ju Jeong et al., 'A Study on Psychological Trauma of Victim and Victim's Families Due to State Violence before and during the Korean War', *Journal of Democracy and Human Rights* 15, no. 3 (2015): 385–414; TRCK, 'Report for Psychological Damage' (Seoul, 2007).
[135] TRCK, Report for Psychological Damage.
[136] Jeong et al., 'A Study on Psychological Trauma of Victim and Victim's Families Due to State Violence before and during the Korean War'.
[137] TRCK, Report for Psychological Damage.

Suffering is a cultural, social, and political product. When a societal structure suppresses particular groups, their suffering expands to public dimensions. In the Korean contexts, multigenerational stigmatization (or *yeon-jua-jae*) is a social structure that justifies the practices of social exclusion and public discrimination, in the social and political arena, of the victims of civilian massacres during the Korean War. *Yeon-jua-jae* refers to a social system for stigmatizing the children and other family members of the transgressors. It places legal responsibility on the criminal's family and relatives, and disables victims from living as an equal citizen in public life.[138]

Because South Korean society after the War developed its democratic political system based on a national narrative of anti-communism, which has deeply affected not only political but also local and cultural life, being stigmatized as 'commies' or 'children of commies' became a justification for multidimensional violence. The labelling is thus a device to identify the victims as second-class citizens or non-citizens. Choi argued that the ordinary lives of victims had been severely oppressed by this political demarcation between citizens and non-citizens, by which victims had to live on the margins of the society as a vulnerable population.[139] As Choi stated,

> Regardless of punishment, once one is nominated as a Red, he or she had to endure societal discrimination and scorning. The stigmatization was indeed a form of violence that gets rid of an individual from society.[140]

As a result, victims of civilian massacres have existed as negative others who are invisible, silenced, not recognized, and have been subjects to social and political exclusion and discrimination.[141] For example, *yeon-jua-jae* operated as a public barricade for victims in the job market. Children of communists were not able to work as public servants because of the records of their parents or other family members slaughtered during the War. Although they could enter into the public sector, they were unlikely to be promoted. Public discrimination was conducted via a system of surveillance. Victims stigmatized as 'commies' were also discriminated against in local societies. Neighbors impeded their appearance in the local market and village conference. Victims were also deprived of their certificates of residence, which isolated them in their houses. For these

[138] *Yeon-jua-jae* is especially a Korean custom that had been practiced in the Joseon dynasty to administer punishment of the criminals and the families and was abolished in 1894. Yet, *yeon-jua-jae* was revived in the course of the Korean War to disable the families of Commies in South Korea and has persisted in the society since then. For more discussion on yeon-jua-jae, see Choi, 'The Civilians' Suffering in the Period of Korean War and the Demarcation between Citizen and Non-Citizen'; Shin, *Truth and State Crime*.
[139] Choi, 'The Civilians' Suffering in the Period of Korean War and the Demarcation between Citizen and Non-Citizen'.
[140] Ibid, 92.
[141] Dong-Jin Lee, 'The Boundaries between "Citizens" and "Non-Citizens": A Case of Korean War-Bereaved Association Incidents', *Society and History* 101 (2014): 141–82; Choi, 'The Civilians' Suffering in the Period of Korean War and the Demarcation between Citizen and Non-Citizen'; Kim, *War and Politics*; Kim, *This Is a War of Memory*.

hardships at the local level, victims had no choice but to move out.

That way, *yeon-jua-jae* plays a role as structural violence that creates a culture of exclusion and a narrative of demonization towards the victims.[142] This social practice has induced a frozen social atmosphere directed at victims. As a result, a social culture of fear, silence, denial, and amnesia have governed the society over five decades, allowing the public to be indifferent towards victims and for victims to be forgotten.[143] By these social systems, surviving and bereaved family members routinely experience traumatic emotions.[144]

Poverty, Family Disorganization, and Low Education

There are other aspects of harm that impoverish victims' everyday lives. Above all, poverty is the most common threat to the surviving and bereaved families' ability to lead an ordinary life.[145] A direct reason for this is the loss of the sole breadwinner for the family. Because the highest percentage of those killed in civilian massacres was young married males who looked after a large family, bereaved family members had to struggle with the absence of the main source of income. In some cases, police officers and local rightists confiscated household goods and real estate of the leftists.[146] Although confiscation was prohibited by law, a vast number of victims' testimonies proved that confiscation was a common phenomenon at a local level.[147] Family disorganization was another distinctive features of the victims.[148] Impoverished living conditions forced many family members of the deceased to diffuse. In many cases, widows remarried after their husbands were killed, and the children were raised by their grandparents or sent to orphanages. Also, the children of the deceased generally had decreased opportunities for formal education. Because they became leaders of the family at an early age, they were not able to finish even the elementary level of education, but had to go to work, and were thus illiterate. This was a significant barrier for them in engaging in public life.

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[142] Tae-Yook Choi, *How Could You Do That?* (Inchon: Jakgadeul, 2018); Choi, Park, and Hyun, *A White Paper on Civilian Massacre in Tae-An*; Jung Gie Choi, 'The Civilians' Suffering in the Period of Korean War and the Demarcation Between Citizen and Non-Citizen'.
[143] Choi, Park, and Hyun, *A White Paper on Civilian Massacre in Tae-An*.
[144] Sung-Hun Han, 'Severe Human Rights Abuses and State Violence: Social Suffering of Victims of Torture and Fabricated Spy', *Korean Sociology Symposium*, 2013, 575–89.
[145] Jeong et al., 'A Study on Psychological Trauma of Victim and Victim's Families Due to State Violence before and during the Korean War'.
[146] Shin, *Truth and State Crime*.
[147] Ibid, 341.
[148] TRCK, Report for Psychological Damage.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has briefly described the contextual background that this research investigates, providing a history of civilian massacres during the Korean War, the political progress of liquidation of the past, and different aspects of victims' suffering. To put it briefly, civilian massacres during the Korean War are a relatively unknown historical fact because of Rhee Syngman government's political justification for the murder. The killing was conducted according to the anti-communism national policy, in order to establish a liberal democratic state in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula before and during the War. The politically-justified mass killing encouraged local rightists to participate in murdering their leftist neighbors. Hundreds of thousands of civilians who were suspected as communists or collaborators were slaughtered in the first half of the War, and countless family members of those killed remained bereaved. Although some government efforts were made to address the unjust past, those efforts failed to do so due to the continued authoritarian regimes. In the oppressive political situations, the surviving and bereaved family members have suffered greatly from multi-layered discrimination and suppression. Being labelled as 'commies', victims have been living as second-class citizens. The social and political structure of the society has directed cultural and structural violence at them. It was not until 2005 that victims were able to voice their suffering when the TRCK was established, and the Roh Moo-Hyun government officially acknowledged the political wrongs of the state in the war and victims as the innocent people.

To conclude, it is salient to take into consideration that victims' meaning-making as an internal mechanism, which this thesis looks at, derives from this particular historical, social and political context of South Korea. For victims' eyes, civilian massacres have developed into a systematic social structure that perpetuates their social status as commies, and it traumatizes them. Although physical violence ended about seventy years ago, cultural or symbolic forms of violence and victimization have continued. Thus, victims' lives are marked by their daily struggle to overcome their trauma and suffering from continued victimization in a way that develops a self-directed internal mechanism to maintain resilience and equilibrium in life and redefine their selfhood.

Chapter 3
Reconciliation and Victim Issues

> In innumerable cases, victims emerge stronger from their trauma. They are able to free themselves from their prior identities, context, and stories, and uncover unfathomed layers of their true being. There, they tap into a power greater than themselves, and are transformed. In the depths of darkness, they find their inner fire and become guiding lights for society.
>
> Rama Mani, 2014[149]

This chapter reviews, analyzes and evaluates previous literature relevant to the research topic. It overviews two umbrella bodies of literature: post-conflict reconciliation and victim issues, as this study's purpose is associated with perspectives on victims in the practice of reconciliation. By reviewing these sets of literature, the trajectory of this research is outlined, and potential contribution to existing knowledge is proposed. [150]

This chapter consists of four sections. The first part provides a conceptual review of post-conflict reconciliation. Since this study looks at reconciliation in the eyes of victims of political violence, it is appropriate to investigate academic debates on reconciliation from previous studies first. It provides a focused analysis of definitions and elements of reconciliation. The second part examines the literature of victim-centeredness in peace and conflict studies. Victim-centeredness is an academic field that presents victims' roles and perspectives in reconciliation and related fields, including transitional justice, peacebuilding, and peace education. By overviewing these works, I will portray the potential and limitations of the current approach to victims and their roles in reconciliation. The third section reviews moral aspects of victims and their roles in peace-related behaviors. In post-conflict environments, scholars tend to study victims in reference to their moral agency in promoting peace and reconciliation in deeply divided societies. Understanding how previous researchers have studied the relationship between victims and the moral approach to building peace gives critical points for this study. Last, the literature regarding South Korea is also examined. The contextual review of the literature draws attention to what has

[149] Rama Mani, 'Integral Justice for Victims', 183.
[150] Helen Aveyard, *Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care: A Practical Guide*, Third edition (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2014); Christine B. Feak and John M. Swales, *Telling a Research Story: Writing a Literature Review* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2009).

been discussed on the research topic within the context of this study. Victim-related issues[151] in South Korea have scarcely been paid attention to in the field of peace studies, and therefore I broaden the scope of reviewing to sociology, psychology, and legal studies.

Overall, this chapter adopts a theoretical form of literature review,[152] mainly focusing on academic discussions from empirical research, except for some policy-oriented literature in the fourth section. It should be acknowledged here that selecting and interpreting the literature that is overviewed in this chapter is based on my subjective judgement of its relevance, importance, and accuracy. Figure 3.1 displays the overall scope of the literature review.

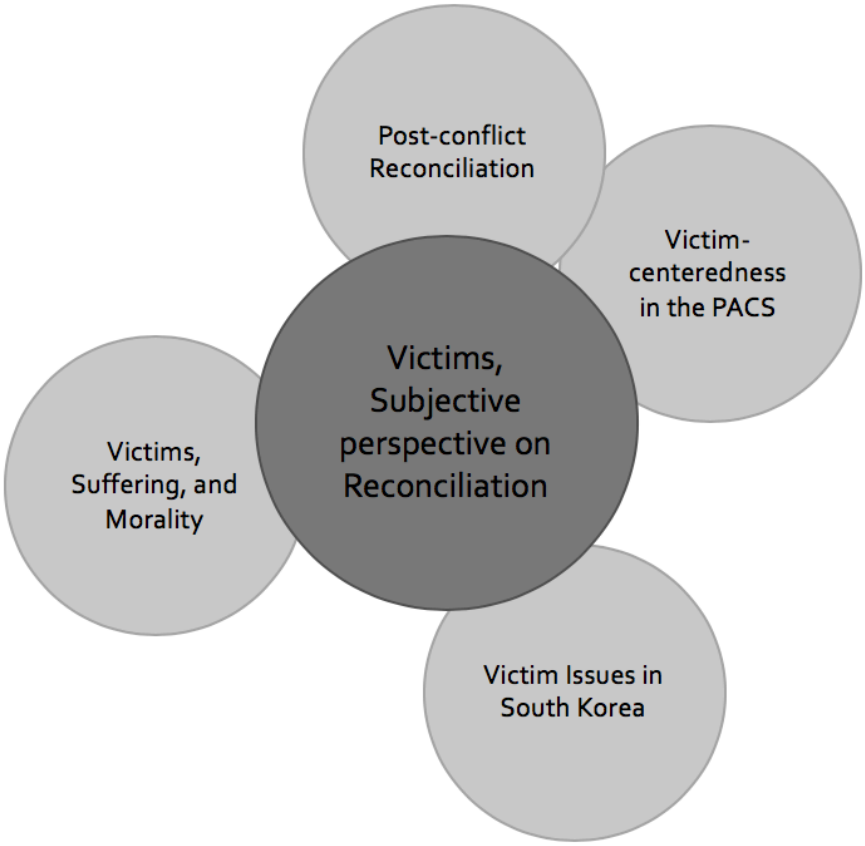

Figure 3.1. Scope of Literature in Relation to the Research Topic

[151] The term, *victim issues*, is widely used in criminology and victimology, to refer to a general concern for victims of all sort of criminal events or accidents, including human trafficking, crimes against humanity, disastrous accidents, etc. However, within the literature of peace and conflict studies, victim issues refer to a series of concerns related to victims and victimhood as a result of violent conflict and support for coping with their trauma and promoting resilience in day to day life. Victims issues are mostly discussed in different sectors such as transitional justice, peacebuilding, and reconciliation that this review deals with.

[152] For different forms of review, see Aveyard, *Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care*.

3.1 Conceptual Literature: Post-conflict Reconciliation

Previous studies on reconciliation are extensive as this phenomenon in post-conflict or deeply-divided societies has many dimensions.[153] Despite these diverse perspectives, this study particularly pays attention to victims' perspectives on reconciliation. For that, I deliberately narrow the scope of the overview of the literature by focusing on definitions, dimensions, and elements as a springboard for further discussion. This conceptual review will be further elaborated with the themes of victims-centeredness and morality in the following sections.

Definitions

Generally, reconciliation is understood as a societal task that attempts to restore a broken relationship between former enemies emerging from violent conflict.[154] It aims to transform antagonistic relationship within individuals, social and political groups in conflict. It is both a goal and a process that builds peaceful coexistence and social reconstruction through establishing new societal beliefs and relationships.[155] To transform ongoing hatred between former enemies into new beliefs and attitudes, it is argued that antagonists need to be bought to a mutual understanding of the past, present and future.[156] Thus, both forward and backwards looking practices are seen as salient for reconciliation.[157] It is important to notice that scholars offer different aims of reconciliation. Some highlight that reconciliation aims for peaceful coexistence between communities in conflict after violent conflict,[158] whereas others argue that it is part of peace processes or a critical value for peacebuilding.[159] Also, reconciliation is seen to play a

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[153] Lederach, *Building Peace*; Erin Daly and Jeremy Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies: Finding Common Ground* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

[154] Brandon Hamber and Gráinne Kelly, 'A Place for Reconciliation? Conflict and Locality in Northern Ireland' (Belfast: Democratic Dialogue, 2005); Maddison, *Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation*; Nevin Aiken, *Identity, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice: Overcoming Intractability in Divided Societies*, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2014); David Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*.

[155] Laurel E. Fletcher and Harvey M. Weinstein, 'Violence and Social Repair: Rethinking the Contribution of Justice to Reconciliation', *Human Rights Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2002): 573–639; Daniel Bar-Tal, *Shared Beliefs in a Society: Social Psychological Analysis* (Thousand Oaks; London; New Delhi: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2000); Bar-Tal and Bennink, 'The Nature of Reconciliation as an Outcome and as a Process'; Aiken, *Identity, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice*.

[156] De Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice*; Daniel Bar-Tal and Gemma H. Bennink, 'The Nature of Reconciliation as an Outcome and as a Process', in *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, ed. Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 11–38; David Bloomfield, 'On Good Terms: Clarifying Reconciliation', Berghof Report (Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2006); John De Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 2002).

[157] Hamber and Kelly, 'A Place for Reconciliation? Conflict and Locality in Northern Ireland'; Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*.

[158] Louis Kriesberg, 'Changing Forms of Coexistence', in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004); Hizkias Assefa, 'Coexistence and Reconciliation in the Northern Region of Ghana', in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory & Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2001), 165–86.

[159] Alice Ackermann, 'Reconciliation as a Peace-Building Process in Postwar Europe', *Peace & Change* 19, no. 3 (1994): 229–50; Wendy Lambourne, 'Justice and Reconciliation: Post-conflict Peacebuilding in Cambodia and Rwanda', ed.

preventive role for further violence. As deterrence, reconciliation ought to preclude violence and atrocities from recurring.[160] Moreover, some studies pay attention to the role of reconciliation in reinforcing democracy. Because democracy can grow when different groups in society are treated equally, even after violent conflict which causes the disparity between groups – mainly victims and offenders – reconciliation is justified to promote social equality.[161] What is critical from previous research is that although the degree of reconciliation differs in its emphasis, it mostly aims for a peaceful harmony as well as restoration.

However, the term 'restoration' often brings about a vigorous conceptual dispute. Some theorists argue that the meaning of restoration is deeply rooted in the Christian image of reconciliation between God and human beings,[162] and thus, it is oriented to promote personal or psychological healing.[163] According to this school of thought, restoring a spiritual or psychological level of relationship is essential to remedy the wounded heart as the legacies of violent conflict deeply affect the human mind and individual lives. In contrast, others argue the restorative sense of reconciliation may belittle other religious perspectives and exclude the nonreligious[164] and alternative perspectives in the secular sense of restoration.[165] Notably, political theorists usually oppose the moral or religious sense of reconciliation.[166] As Schaap specifies, the moral tone of reconciliation is improper in post-conflict societies because it targets a vacuum harmony when there may be 'nothing to go back to', belittles as an amendment the polity which caused political violence, and does not differentiate between the political and the moral.[167] In this debate, other scholars emphasize a holistic approach between the moral and the political, undertaking reconciliation for both interpersonal restoration and national integration.[168] They stress that individual and political reconciliation in terms of restoration are not necessarily conflictual but can be complementary, since the social division coming from violent conflict is multifaceted.

Mohammed Abu-Nimer (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2001), 311–38; Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov, 'Dialectics between Stable Peace and Reconciliation', in *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, ed. Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[160] Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.

[161] Ibid.

[162] John de Gruchy shows that in the New Testament, reconciliation appears 15 times only in Pauline texts. Its meaning is interchangeable with '*salvation*', '*redemption*', or '*atonement*'. *See* de Gruchy, *Reconciliation*, 45.

[163] Susan Dywer, 'Reconciliation for Realists', in *Dilemmas of Reconciliation: Cases and Concepts*, ed. Carol Prager and Trudy Govier (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003), 91–110.

[164] Dan Bar-On, *Tell Your Life Story: Creating Dialogue Among Jews and Germans, Israelis and Palestinians* (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2006).

[165] Fletcher and Weinstein, 'Violence and Social Repair'.

[166] Colleen Murphy, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Andrew Schaap, *Political Reconciliation* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005); Darrel Moellendorf, 'Reconciliation as a Political Value', *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38, no. 2 (2007): 205–21; Ernesto Verdeja, *Unchopping a Tree: Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Political Violence* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).

[167] Schaap, *Political Reconciliation*, 12-13.

[168] De Gruchy, *Reconciliation*; Joseph Liechty and Cecelia Clegg, *Moving Beyond Sectarianism: Religion, Conflict and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland* (Blackrock, Co. Dublin: Columba Press, 2001).

This discussion can be viewed as different paradigm of reconciliation, which is often expressed as 'thin or thick', 'shallow or deep', and 'minimal or maximal' reconciliation. In conventional studies, maximalists understand reconciliation as a deep process of healing and restoration, involving practices like apology, contrition, and forgiveness.[169] In this understanding, reconciliation takes place when offenders acknowledge their wrong deeds, accept responsibility, and express remorse, and victims show the willingness to forgive them.[170] In contrast, minimalists aim for coexistence between adversaries through constitutional amendments and political compromises.[171] In this view, reconciliation has little to do with interpersonal relations and should not give victims a liability to forgive offenders.[172] Instead, reconciliation is only to guarantee peaceful harmony and to deter further violence.

Dimensions

Theoretically, reconciliation is discussed at various societal levels. As violent conflict affects different layers of a broken relationship, it is critical to delineate the varying degrees of reconciliation. Theorists tend to approach reconciliation on personal, community, and national or political dimensions. While there is some literature on personal reconciliation in post-conflict environments, most deals with the community and national aspects.

Reconciliation at the personal level aims to restore a peaceful relationship between individual victims and perpetrators. Outcomes of violent conflict range from political strife to interpersonal confrontation, which determines and segregates individuals as victims and perpetrators of violence. This is a private realm of reconciliation. Scholars contend that on the interpersonal level, reconciliation may be seen as the form either of a nonviolent form of coexistance[173] or of deep restoration of the antagonistic relationship.[174] To achieve this level of reconciliation, psychological and spiritual attempts must be performed to heal victims' trauma and wounds and to motivate offenders' acknowledgement and apology.[175]

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[169] Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace*.
[170] Richard A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[171] Schaap, *Political Reconciliation*; Verdeja, *Unchopping a Tree*; David A. Crocker, 'Reckoning with Past Wrongs: A Normative Framework', in *Dilemmas of Reconciliation: Cases and Concepts*, ed. Carol A. L. Prager and Trudy Govier (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003), 39–64. Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, 'The Moral Foundations of Truth Commissions', in *Truth v. Justice: The Morality of Truth Commissions*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg and Dennis Thompson (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 22–44.
[172] Verdeja, 2009
[173] Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.
[174] Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice*, 3 edition (Scottdale: Herald Press, 2003).
[175] Bloomfield, 'On Good Terms'.

Meanwhile, other theorists emphasize that interpersonal reconciliation cannot be complete unless broader aspects of community and national reconciliation are addressed. Community reconciliation refers to the reconstruction of broken community relations.[176] When conflict is violently performed by one group on another or between groups, a cleavage segregates people who used to live together but now live separately. These groups are identified either as victims or offenders. Community reconciliation may also be a deeper function of interpersonal reconciliation. At this level, reconciliation means peaceful coexistence and people's reintegration in their communities.[177] It is concerned with a local dynamic that prioritizes local populations as a process of reconciliation.[178]

Reconciliation also aims at national and/or political reconstruction. It points to macro reconciliation as part of state-building projects after civil wars and state-led violence towards civilians to promote national integration, security, and democracy.[179] National reconciliation aims to integrate segregated broader political groups. As a political project, elite national groups pursue reconciliation through democratic institutions such as truth and reconciliation commissions.[180] Through the activities of these insitutions, elite groups attempt to rebuild the hostile relation between the state authority and civilians, or among civilians through confronting the violent past by integrating conflictual narratives of the past[181] and building political trust.[182] This level of reconciliation is intertwined with the historical level of reconciliation that redresses legacies of historical injustice.[183] For this purpose, reconciliation attempts to correct distorted historical memories about historical wrongs and develop a shared narrative of the past.

Elements

Reconciliation comprises various components. As a complex process, it requires diverse aspects

[176] Lederach, *Building Peace*; Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*; Hamber and Kelly, 'A Place for Reconciliation?'; Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.
[177] Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.
[178] Hugo Van Der Merwe, 'National and Community Reconciliation: Competing Agendas in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission', in *Burying the Past: Making Peace and Doing Justice after Civil Conflict*, ed. Nigel Biggar (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 101–24.
[179] Trudy Govier and Wilhelm Verwoerd, 'Trust and the Problem of National Reconciliation', *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 32, no. 2 (2002): 178–205; Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.
[180] Van Der Merwe, 'National and Community Reconciliation'; Molly Andrews, 'Grand National Narratives and the Project of Truth Commissions: A Comparative Analysis', *Media, Culture & Society* 25, no. 1 (2003): 45–65; Claire Moon, *Narrating Political Reconciliation: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008); Gutmann and Thompson, 'The Moral Foundations of Truth Commissions'.
[181] Moon, *Narrating Political Reconciliation*; Govier and Verwoerd, 'Trust and the Problem of National Reconciliation'; Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace*.
[182] Murphy, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation;* Verdeja*, Unchopping a Tree.*
[183] Elazar Barkan, 'Historical Reconciliation: Redress, Rights, and Politics', *Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 1 (2006): 1–15; Elazar Barkan, 'Introduction: Historians and Historical Reconciliation', *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 4 (2009): 899–913.

of practice. Although scholars have proposed different elements of reconciliation and argued to contextualize them, there are five common elements: truth, justice, apology, forgiveness, and reparation.

Truth

Truth is a critical element of reconciliation. Knowing what has happened during and after violent conflict is the basic right to the truth for victims and is the cornerstone of restoring the relationship between victims and offender, as well as the broader level of national integration.[184] Truth in post-conflict societies is pursued in the form of truth-telling, and many societies do so by establishing truth commissions.[185] Although there are different types of truth such as forensic and narrative truth,[186] truth can be a restorative agent. Truth is not the sole pillar of reconciliation, but there is no dispute over whether truth provides the fundamental condition for it. Scholars view truth as providing the elementary ground for achieving justice and forgiveness.

Justice

Together with truth, justice is another central element of reconciliation. Justice, in its basic sense, calls wrongdoers into criminal proceeding to take legal responsibility.[187] Justice precludes perpetrators from evading their responsibility for their wrongdoings.[188] It is a form of social acknowledgement that violence was wrongly conducted. Although there is a general perception that the criminal form of justice does not effectively serve for reconciliation, punishment is an undeniable factor for reconciliation. Despite this, a growing number of theorists have noted that there are also different kinds of justice, such as corrective and restorative justice.[189] These forms of justice have been discussed in conjunction with victim-focused justice, as will be mentioned in the next section.

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[184] Priscilla B. Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions*, 2 edition (New York: Routledge, 2010).
[185] Ibid.
[186] For the different genres of truth, see Paul Gready, 'Novel Truths: Literature and Truth Commissions', *Comparative Literature Studies* 46, no. 1 (2009): 156–76.
[187] Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence*, 1 edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999); Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[188] Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness.*
[189] Rama Mani, *Beyond Retribution: Seeking Justice in the Shadows of War* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002); Fletcher and Weinstein, 'Violence and Social Repair'.

Apology

Another component of reconciliation is apology. Apology is the perpetrators' formal acceptance and gesture of taking responsibility for their wrongdoings with expressions of contrition and repentance.[190] As negative emotions and beliefs towards former enemies persist deeply in society, scholars pay attention to the role of apology to ease the frozen bias and perceptions. Although apologetic statements cannot alter what has been done, they can alter both victims and perpetrators' minds, leading to victims' forgiveness and reconciliation.[191] Most studies of apology have focused on its transformative function at the national or political level.[192]

Forgiveness

Forgiveness represents the thicker version of reconciliation. It is a moral request for victims to abandon the will of revenge toward their offenders.[193] Forgiveness is a bi-directional process that requires acknowledgement, remorse, and apology on the part of offenders, and an expression of willingness to forgive on the part of victims, and it may thus promote the deeper level of reconciliation.[194] By the act of forgiving, victims may overcome retributive emotion[195] and avoid self-destruction. [196] Although most researchers view forgiving acts as critical to mobilize a reconciliatory process between victims and perpetrators, it has a complex relationship with reconciliation. Some consider that forgiveness has a close relationship with reconciliation or is a synonym in some contexts. [197] For other theorists, forgiveness has nothing to do with reconciliation as it is a private affair.[198] Despite debates over the relationship, most scholars agree

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[190] Nick Smith, *I Was Wrong: The Meaning of Apologies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[191] Nicholas Tavuchis, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
[192] Danielle Celermajer, *The Sins of the Nation and the Ritual of Apologies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Pablo De Greiff, 'The Role of Apologies in National Reconciliation Processes: On Making Trustworthy Institutions Trusted', in *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past*, ed. Mark Gibney et al. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 120–36; Melissa Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[193] Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*; Trudy Govier, *Forgiveness and Revenge* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2002); Margaret Urban Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relation after Wrongdoing* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Charles L. Griswold, *Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[194] Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relation after Wrongdoing*.
[195] Govier, *Forgiveness and Revenge*.
[196] Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*.
[197] Siri Gloppen, 'Roads to Reconciliation: A Conceptual Framework', in *Roads to Reconciliation*, ed. Skaar, Elin, Siri Gloppen, and Astri Suhrke (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2005); Antjie Krog, '"This Thing Called Reconciliation…" Forgiveness as Part of an Interconnectedness-towards-Wholeness', *South African Journal of Philosophy* 27, no. 4 (2008): 353–66.
[198] Murphy, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation*.

that forgiveness promotes reconciliation and vice versa.

Reparation

Reparation is also an essential component of reconciliation. In the legal sense, reparation refers to monetary payment for those who were wronged, yet it expands to overall attempts to come to terms with the violent past.[199] Because victims' harms are not only financial but also social and political, the dimensions of reparation surpass simple compensation, but intend "to repair the shame and humiliation previously inflicted on victims and to restore their reputation and equal status in the public eyes".[200] Therefore, scholars tend to see that reparation serves for victims' suffering, on the one hand, and to correct the social structure on the other. This holistic sense of reparation is a critical part of reconciliation. In particular, compensation as part of reparation has a symbolic and emotional meaning just as apology does, although it never offsets victims' loss and suffering.[201]

In the first section, I have surveyed some literature on post-conflict reconciliation. This review presents the theoretical aspects of reconciliation, which lead to a targeted discussion for this study. These theoretical conversations underline that reconciliation is multifaceted, consisting of diverse perspectives and elements. This study agrees to the previous views on reconciliation in post-conflict societies. However, as most scholars agree, reconciliation in that context has a significant lack of empirical data. That is, it is anecdotal if such practices promote the reconciliation of the broken relationship between adversaries after horrendous violence. Therefore, it is often emphasized that more research on reconciliation from the perspective of conflict-affected populations or victims-focused practices is needed. The current research is an attempt to respond to this academic request, investigating how victims approach reconciliation after violent conflict.

[199] Lisa J. Lapante, 'The Plural Justice Aims of Reparations', in *Transitional Justice Theories*, ed. Susanne Buckley-Zistel et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 66–84; Stephanie Wolfe, *The Politics of Reparations and Apologies* (New York; Heidelberg; Dordrecht; London: Springer, 2014).
[200] Teitel, *Transitional Justice,* 126-7.
[201] Marc Howard Ross, 'Ritual and the Politics of Reconciliation', in *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, ed. Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 197–224.

3.2 Thematic Literature One: Victim-centeredness in Peace and Conflict Studies

This section examines the literature on the theme of victim-centeredness in peace and conflict studies (PACS). To understand this research's purpose in an adequate way, thus, victims' internal mechanism associating with reconciliation, it is essential to look at how scholars have studied victim-focused approaches in the previous literature. As of victims-centeredness, a growing number of scholars in PACS have mainly paid attention to victims' roles, voices, and agency in the field of reconciliation. This academic trend reflects the assumption that victims are not just passive, silent, and dependent but also participatory, subjective, and political, having transformative roles in building sustainable peace.[202] This point of view overlaps extensively with the current study, in that victims of violent conflict are capable of empowering themselves from their trauma and have a great potential to contribute to reconciliation as part of sustainable peace. Importantly, the vision of reconciliation is normatively shared with other research fields, including transitional justice, peacebuilding, and peace education, all of which focus on the roles of victims and their subjectivity. Although each field is separately discussed, researchers study victim-centeredness, concentrating on the umbrella theme of reconciliation. Thus, here I investigate different fields with regard to the victim-focused approach, in order to make sense of the appropriate point of this research. Literature on victim-centeredness is considered in the light of reconciliation, including transitional justice, peacebuilding, and peace education.

Transitional Justice

One of the most prominent fields that concerns victims and reconciliation in PACS is transitional justice (TJ).[203] As a global norm,[204] TJ in conventional studies has paid attention to trials and truth commissions to reconstruct shattered societies after civil wars and violent authoritative regimes.[205] The tool is designed to promote reconciliation and peace in abiding by the principles of truth and justice.[206] However, recent empirical studies in transitional societies have pointed out

[202] Breen-Smyth, *Truth Recovery and Justice after Conflict*.
[203] Durliolle and Brett, 'Introduction.'
[204] Thomas Obel Hansen, 'The Vertical and Horizontal Expansion of Transitional Justice: Explanation and Implications for a Contested Field', in *Transitional Justice Theories*, ed. Susanne Buckley-Zistel et al. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 105–24; Rosemary Nagy, 'Transitional Justice as Global Project: Critical Reflections', *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (2008): 275–89.
[205] Teitel, *Transitional Justice*; Ruti G. Teitel, 'The Law and Politics of Contemporary Transitional Justice', *Cornell International Law Journal* 38, no. 3 (2005): 837–62; Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths*.
[206] Large number of TJ scholars contend that the purpose of the TJ mechanism aims to achieve peace and reconciliation by implementing transformative practices. For this position, see Aiken, *Identity, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice*; Martina Fischer, 'Transitional Justice and Reconciliation: Theory and Practice', in *Advancing Conflict Transformation*, ed. Beatrix Austin, Martina Fischer, and Hans J. Giessmann, The Berghof Handbook 2 (Oplanden: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2011), 405–30; Elin Skaar, 'Reconciliation in a Transitional Justice Perspective', *Transitional Justice Review* 1, no. 1 (2013): 54–103; Wendy Lambourne, 'Transformative Justice, Reconciliation, and Peacebuilding', in *Transitional*

that whether these practices promote reconciliation is anecdotal, and the practices are performed in an elite-driven manner, resulting in the exclusion of the conflict-affected local voices.[207] Ironically, whereas elite-led prosecutorial proceedings and human rights principles have burgeoned along with the legal perspective, most conflict-affected populations remain foreign to the mechanism.[208] In particular, many have noticed that the voices of individual victims or victim groups have been significantly marginalized under the conventional TJ mechanism.[209] The TJ measure often fails to understand victims' perspectives on justice or to meet victims' needs and aspirations, subjugating victim groups and individual victims to the liberal practices of state-building or peacebuilding.[210] Meanwhile, some literature has developed the victim-centered approach to the TJ mechanism as a form of local voice, custom, and agency.[211] Scholars in these works of literature underpin that TJ practices ought to reflect what victims want for the mechanism to work for reconciliation. They particularly focus on victims' voices and needs.

Victims' voice

Victim-centeredness is widely discussed according to the degree to which victims' voice play a role in the TJ mechanism. As for the role of victims' voice, scholars pay attention to its positive functions. For example, Humphrey conducted a study with this perspective.[212] In Bosnia and Herzegovina, institution-driven TJ is severely limited in fostering reconciliation in the post-war period. It even aggravates division between ethnic groups. However, victims, according to him, are

Justice Theories, ed. Susanne Buckley-Zistel et al. (London; New York: Routledge, 2014)

[207] Rosalind Shaw and Lars Waldorf, 'Introduction: Localizing Transitional Justice', in *Localizing Transitional Justice: Interventions and Priorities after Mass Violence*, ed. Rosalind Shaw, Lars Waldorf, and Pierre Hazan (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 3–26; Nagy, 'Transitional Justice as Global Project'; Kieran McEvoy and Lorna McGregor, 'Transitional Justice From Below: An Agenda for Research, Policy and Praxis', in *Transitional Justice from Below Grassroots Activism and the Struggle for Change*, ed. Kieran McEvoy and Lorna McGregor (Oxford; Portland: Hart Publishing, 2008), 1–14.

[208] Judith Renner, *Discourse, Normative Change and the Quest for Reconciliation in Global Politics*, Reprint edition (Place of publication not identified: Manchester University Press, 2013); Lia Kent, *The Dynamics of Transitional Justice: International Models and Local Realities in East Timor* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013); McEvoy and McGregor, 'Transitional Justice From Below: An Agenda for Research, Policy and Praxis'.

[209] Harvey Weinstein, 'Victims, Transitional Justice and Social Reconstruction: Who Is Setting the Agenda?', in *Justice for Victims: Perspectives on Rights, Transition and Reconciliation*, ed. Inge Vanfraechem, Antony Pemberton, and Felix Mukwiza Ndahinda (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), 161–83.

[210] To this, McEvoy and his colleague question the adequacy of the liberal tendency of the TJ mechanism and argue a thicker understanding of what conflict-affected local populations think is critical to implementing transitional justice practices. See, Kieran McEvoy, 'Letting Go of Legalism: Developing a "Thicker" Version of Transitional Justice', in *Transitional Justice from Below Grassroots Activism and the Struggle for Change*, ed. Kieran McEvoy and Lorna McGregor (Hart Publishing, 2008), 15–46; Kieran McEvoy and Lorna McGregor, 'Transitional Justice From Below: An Agenda for Research, Policy and Praxis', in *Transitional Justice from Below Grassroots Activism and the Struggle for Change*, ed. Kieran McEvoy and Lorna McGregor (Oxford; Portland: Hart Publishing, 2008), 1–14.

[211] Jemima Garćia-Godos, 'Review Essay. Victims in Focus', *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 10 (2016): 350–58; Durliolle and Brett, 'Introduction'.

[212] Michael Humphrey, 'Victims, Civil Society and Transitional Justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina', *Temida* 15, no. 1 (2012): 59–75.

capable of witnessing and documenting what happened in the past, in order to prevent the denial of war crimes. In this study, Humphrey argues that victims' voices are the living witnesses that record the past, and it is a fulcrum of national unity arising from violent conflict. Bryson connects oral history to victim-centered TJ in the context of Northern Ireland.[213] For her, the 'from below' precept refers to giving victims a voice, empowering them to tell about their life histories of experience of violence. Victims' lives reveal unheard voices, plural voices of victims, and gender sensitivity. In this research, Bryson contends that documenting victims' stories offers a different layer to the dominant practice of punishment and reparation programs. In a similar vein, Simpson argues that while master narratives on peace and reconciliation exclude victims' account of their lived experience, focusing on their languages and stories may bring about different outcomes of the TJ mechanism.[214] He claims that allowing victims to have their voices raises their pride and sense of belonging to their societies, so that they can reclaim their narratives and stories, which provide fundamental historical and public functions for the practices of dealing with the past. This research has clearly proven that while the conventional TJ practices are limited to the institutional approach to redressing the violent past, failing to create a transformative step to reconciliation, victims have shown more potential when they have their voices heard.

Nonetheless, others have cautioned instrumentalization of victims' voices. For instance, McEvoy and McConnachie have noted that victims' voices are often selected by lawyers and politicians with institutional purposes to frame broader political and social narratives in transitional societies.[215] Thorsten et al. also noted that although victim participation may be in line with the institutionalization of individual voices in global TJ politics, this purposeful usage of victims' voice may aggravate conflict rather than empowering them.[216] Despite that, it is generally agreed that having victims raise their voices in the process of TJ addresses their life experiences at the time and in the aftermath of violent conflict, and simultaneously plays a deterrent role for further violence.

Victims' Needs

Other groups of TJ scholars focus on victims' needs. For them, victim-centeredness is synonymous with the need approach. Amongst others, Robins diagnoses that the liberal sense of TJ practices

[213] Anna Bryson, 'Victims, Violence, and Voice.
[214] Kirk Simpson, 'Voices Silenced, Voices Rediscovered: Victims of Violence and the Reclamation of Language in Transitional Societies', *International Journal of Law in Context* 3, no. 2 (2007): 89–103.
[215] Kieran McEvoy and Kirsten McConnachie, 'Victims and Transitional Justice: Voice, Agency and Blame', *Social & Legal Studies*, no. 4 (2013): 489–514.
[216] Thorsten Bonacker, Wolfgang Form, and Dominik Pfeiffer, 'Transitional Justice and Victim Participation in Cambodia: A World Polity Perspective', *Global Society* 25, no. 1 (2011): 113–34.

has largely failed to satisfy what victims need and aspire to after violent conflict.[217] He argues that because victims often experience continued social discrimination and stigmatization after violent events, the TJ mechanism ought to meet victims' needs as the primary agenda if it is to be responsive to past wrongdoings and their suffering. He goes on to say, victims can realize increased agency when they express their needs, and they may take the lead in TJ practices to restore their violated human rights and dignity.[218] Thus, according to Robins, the need approach allows victims to empower themselves as well as their everyday lives.[219] Investigating victims in Nepal and Timor-Leste using qualitative methods, Robins found that victims' needs can be categorized into emotional, economic, psychological, and social dimensions, all of which are basic conditions of human rights.[220] In line with this, other scholars have explored victims' needs through the lens of truth-telling, justice, reparation, and emotions, as will be introduced below.

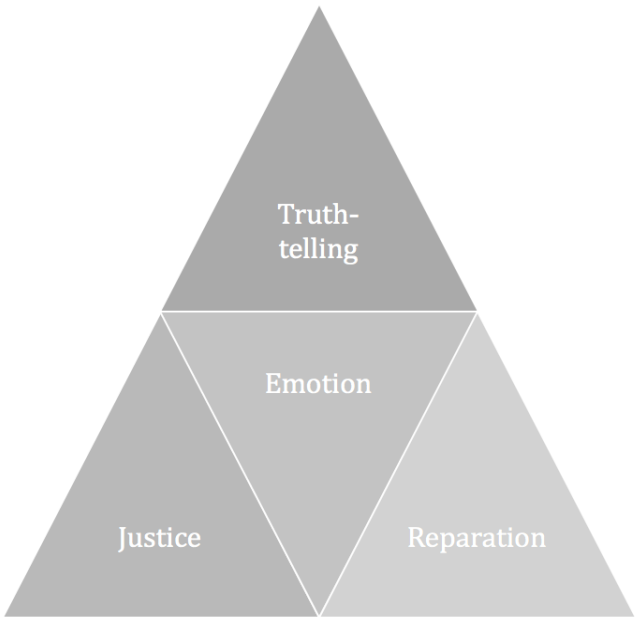

Figure 3.2 Themes of Victims' Needs in the TJ literature

Truth-telling

As part of the needs approach, truth-telling is a fundamental condition for victims' needs,

[217] Simon Robins, 'Failing Victims? The Limits of Transitional Justice in Addressing the Needs of Victims of Violations', *Human Rights and International Legal Discourse*, 2017, 41–58.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Simon Robins, 'Challenging the Therapeutic Ethic: A Victim-Centred Evaluation of Transitional Justice Process in Timor-Leste', *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 6, no. 1 (2012): 83–105.
[220] Robins, 'Challenging the Therapeutic Ethic; Simon Robins, 'Towards Victim-Centred Transitional Justice: Understanding the Needs of Families of the Disappeared in Post-conflict Nepal', *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 5, no. 1 (2011): 75–98.

attributed to a belief that truth heals victims. Although some scholars have noted that whether truth-telling has the restorative power to heal victims' trauma is not taken for granted in many cases, and increases the desire for revenge, reopens old wounds and hardens victims' trauma,[221] telling the truth provides victims with an opportunity to express their experience of suffering. Indeed, a number of post-conflict societies have seen that victims are restored or empowered via a process of truth-telling and truth-recovery activities, that lead the reconciliatory process.[222] To examine this, some psychologists have conducted clinical experiments to measure the healing process of traumatized victims of war.[223] Cienfuegos and Monelli found out that people telling their stories mitigates their stress and suffering, and the story tellers tend to alleviate their emotional deterioration and are reopen to growth.[224] Igreja et al. have stressed that during their testimonies, victims reconstruct the meaning of their suffering.[225] More recently, Guthrey has pointed out the effect of social acknowledgement when victims recount their own stories, making them feel empowered and able to experience catharsis.[226] These researchers underline that telling the truth is psychologically needed for victim healing.

Justice

TJ scholars are also concerned with what victims' views on justice bring to the TJ mechanism.[227] What is commonly argued by scholars is that victims' perspective on justice goes far beyond criminal justice and engages more with a broader demand for restoration, healing, and material needs. Punishment is one of the elements of justice, and it does not represent victims' desire for justice.[228] Previous research has noted that there are three types of justice when it focuses on victims.

First, criminal justice is essential. Regarding victims, researchers are concerned that victims have rights to be involved with the proceedings, and that their participation makes the process more

[221] Brandon Hamber, *Transforming Societies after Political Violence: Truth, Reconciliation, and Mental Health* (New York: Springer, 2009).
[222] Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths*; Audrey R. Chapman, 'Truth Commissions as Instruments of Forgiveness and Reconciliation', in *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (Templeton Foundation Press, 2001), 257–78.
[223] Ana Julia Cienfuegos and Cristina Monelli, 'The Testimony of Political Repression as a Therapeutic Instrument', *Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 53, no. 1 (1983): 43–51; Victor Igreja et al., 'Testimony Method to Ameliorate Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms', *British Journal of Psychiatry* 184, no. 3 (2004): 251–57; Janie A Van Dijk, Mirjam J A Schoutrop, and Philip Spinhoven, 'Testimony Theraphy: Treatment Method for Traumatized Victims of Organized Violence' 57, no. 3 (2003): 361–73.
[224] Cienfuegos and Monelli, 'The Testimony of Political Repression as a Therapeutic Instrument', 50.
[225] Igreja et al., 'Testimony Method to Ameliorate Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms'.
[226] Guthrey, *Victim Healing and Truth Commissions*.
[227] Jemima Garćia-Godos and Chandra Lekha Sriram, 'Introduction', in *Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding on the Ground: Victims and Ex-Combatants*, ed. Chandra Lekha Sriram et al. (London: Routledge, 2013), 1–19.
[228] Fletcher and Weinstein, 'Violence and Social Repair'; Mani, *Beyond Retribution*.

restorative and inclusive. With this recognition, Erez, amongst others, diagnoses the general failure of the criminal justice system in the 1990s to include victims and to provide a satisfactory outcome for them.[229] She contends that victims' voices or statements may result in a higher level of victims' satisfaction with justice, and also an improvement in the justice system. In the same vein, Shapland argues that victims ought to be criminal justice agencies, being responsible for more involvement within the justice system through active participation and restorative proposals.[230] Second, victim-led justice is widely associated with restorative justice. Theorists understand that the growing initiatives of victim participation in truth-telling or reconciliation processes within the TJ framework can be seen as restorative justice, which aims for relational change between offenders and victims.[231] Victim-centered justice does not undermine the need for prosecution, but attention is given to hybridity between criminal and restorative justice. Scholars have determined that restorative justice help victims return to local community life[232] and healing.[233] Third, others focus on distributive or socioeconomic justice. Scholars see that although restorative justice has transformative roles for victims' restoration, it forces victims to adopt moral and ethical behaviors such as forgiveness. Distributive justice, in contrast, emphasizes victims' basic economic needs and rights after wrongdoings inflicted on them. Restorative justice as a form of victims' justice is problematic in that simply reconciling the relationship between victims and perpetrators does not guarantee material benefits for victims.[234] Instead, economic justice as part of reparation acknowledges the vulnerability and suffering of victims as a result of unjust political violence.[235] In this line, scholars and practitioners pay attention to reparation programs in TJ practices. García-Godos draws attention to the role victims' organizations play as political actors, demanding distributive justice based on socioeconomic rights.[236] In Colombian and Peruvian TJ processes, victims' organizations entered into a political process of legitimizing reparations for victims, which was effective. A final area of

[229] Edna Erez, 'Integrating a Victim Perspective in Criminal Justice Through Victim Impact Statement', in *Integrating a Victim Perspective within Criminal Justice: International Debates*, ed. Adam Crawford and Jo Goodey (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000), 165–84.
[230] Joanna Shapland, 'Victims and Criminal Justice: Creating Responsible Criminal Justice Agencies', in *Integrating a Victim Perspective within Criminal Justice: International Debates*, ed. Adam Crawford and Jo Goodey (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000), 147–64.
[231] Ray Nickson, 'Participation as Restoration: The Current Limits of Restorative Justice for Victim Participants in International Criminal Trials', in *Restorative Justice in Transitional Settings*, ed. Kerry Clamp (London: Routledge, 2016); Clamp, 'Restorative Justice as a Contested Response to Conflict and the Challenge of the Transitional Context'; Kerry Clamp, *Restorative Justice in Transition* (London: Routledge, 2013).
[232] Ami Harbin and Jennifer J. Llewellyn, 'Restorative Justice in Transitions: The Problem of "the Community" and Collective Responsibility', in *Restorative Justice in Transitional Settings*, ed. Kerry Clamp (London: Routledge, 2016), 133–51.
[233] For this aspect, see Hamber, *Transforming Societies after Political Violence*.
[234] Chandra Lekha Sriram, 'Victim-Centred Justice and DDR in Sierra Leone', in *Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding on the Ground: Victims and Ex-Combatants*, ed. Chandra Lekha Sriram et al. (London: Routledge, 2013), 159–77.
[235] Garćia-Godos and Sriram, 'Introduction'.
[236] Jemima Garćia-Godos, 'Victims' Rights and Distributive Justice: In Search of Actors', *Human Rights Review* 14 (2013): 241–55.

scholarship suggests a holistic dimension of justice which supports victims' empowerment.[237] For example, Mani states that victim-centered justice ought to be a combination of legal, societal, cultural, ecological, and spiritual justice.[238] Because individual victims' ability to transcend their suffering and to make their everyday life meaningful is not possible solely by financial support, but rather by complex and multi-layered needs in their lives, the comprehensiveness of justice may motivate victims to overcome personal trauma and contribute to the transformation of the society.

Reparation

Another aspect of victims' need focuses on reparation. According to a UN resolution,[239] reparation is a broad term to redress harms caused to victims, which includes restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition. Scholars in TJ tend to assume that reparation aims to protect victims from further violence and repair their harms in different forms.[240] They also accept that reparation is not always in monetary form but can also be symbolic, including reaffirmation of victims' dignity and apology.[241] Therefore, reparation is closely related to victims' basic needs as well as social acknowledgement of wrongdoings.

In this regard, scholars pay attention to whether reparation has a therapeutic function for victims. For example, Wemmers has focused on how reparation can meet victims' diverse needs, and so lead to a healing process.[242] Adopting Maslow's hierarchy of needs, she argues that reparation ought to meet the various types of victims' needs, from psychological needs to self-esteem. She has determined that reparation is interrelated to victim-centered justice. It may heal victims in trauma only when it promotes justice for them. Danieli, investigating victims and survivors of the Nazi Holocaust, reported how victims view reparation.[243] She ascertained that victims tend to understand reparation or reparatory justice as something beyond monetary support, and that it

[237] Mani, 'Integral Justice for Victims'; Wendy Lambourne, 'Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding after Mass Violence', *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* 3 (2009): 28–48.
[238] Mani, 'Integral Justice for Victims'.
[239] See 'Responsibility of States for internally wrongful act'.
Available at: https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/draft_articles/9_6_2001.pdf
[240] Luke Moffett, 'Transitional Justice and Reparations: Remedying the Past?', in *Research Handbook of Transitional Justice*, ed. Cheryl Lawther, Luke Moffett, and Dov Jacobs (Cheltenham; Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017), 377–400.
[241] Theo van Boven, 'Victims' Rights to a Remedy and Reparation; Moffett, 'Transitional Justice and Reparations.'
[242] Jo-Anne M. Wemmers, 'The Healing Role of Reparation', in *Reparation for Victims of Crimes against Humanity: The Healing Role of Reparation*, ed. Jo-Ann M. Wemmers (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 221–33.
[243] Yael Danieli, 'Massive Trauma and the Healing Role of Reparative Justice', in *Reparations for Victims of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity: Systems in Place and Systems in the Making*, ed. Carla Ferstman, Mariana Goetz, and Alan Stephens (Leiden; Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009), 41–78.

has more to do with social acknowledgement, commemoration and education.[244] This perspective further connects to victims' justice, including their individual dignity and power, as well as raising social awareness of potential further violence. Thus, it is important to notice that reparation is closely related to justice for victims.

Emotions

Another approach to victims' needs is emotional needs. Shnabel, Nadler, and their colleagues developed an emotional needs-based model with a socio-psychological perspective on reconciliation.[245] What they argue is that reconciliation may be promoted when the emotional needs of victims and offenders are satisfied. Rather than focusing on victims' material needs or instrumental motivations, this approach underlines that the conciliatory process ought to consider the emotional needs of victims and perpetrators; otherwise, both victims and perpetrators are unwilling to become reconciled with each other. These studies have pointed out that victims need a stronger sense of power, whereas perpetrators require a restored moral image and social acceptance for reconciliation to be performed after episodes of transgression.[246] From this point of view, Shnabel et al., using quantitative questionnaires, have proven the positive function of emotional needs of Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Arab populations, and Jews and Germans.[247] More recently, Shnabel and Nadler determined that the emotional messages between victims and perpetrators are reciprocal, victimhood is reduced, and willingness to forgive offenders is increased.[248] The emotional needs model denotes the importance of psychological support to victims and perpetrators, and the moral and emotional balance empowers both victims and perpetrators, leading to their willingness to effectively reconcile.

As seen thus far, the literature of TJ has focused broadly on practices of victim-centeredness, and pays particular attention to victims' voices and needs as agents of reconciliation. Although the conventional discourse on TJ has shown that understanding 'what victims want' and 'what kind of support they need' is critical for broadening the perspective on TJ, leading to reconciliation,

[244] See also, Teitel, *Transitional Justice*.
[245] Nurit Shnabel and Arie Nadler, 'A Need-Based Model of Reconciliation: Satisfying the Differential Emotional Needs of Victim and Perpetrator as a Key to Promoting Reconciliation', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94, no. 1 (2008): 116–32; Nurit Shnabel et al., 'Promoting Reconciliation Through the Satisfaction of the Emotional Needs of Victimized and Perpetrating Group Members: The Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 35, no. 8 (2009): 1021–30; Nurit Shnabel and Arie Nadler, 'The Role of Agency and Morality in Reconciliation Processes: The Perspective of the Needs-Based Model', *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 24, no. 6 (2015): 477–83.
[246] Shnabel and Nadler, 'The Role of Agency and Morality in Reconciliation Processes'.
[247] Shnabel et al., 'Promoting Reconciliation Through the Satisfaction of the Emotional Needs of Victimized and Perpetrating Group Members'.
[248] Shnabel and Nadler, 'The Role of Agency and Morality in Reconciliation Processes'.

deeper questions concerning how victims endure their suffering and why they have come to such a position are largely missing. It may result in a partial approach to victim-centeredness, repeating the conventional perception of victims as passive, vulnerable, and objective. It may also reproduce the institutional approach to their needs. For these reasons, a more nuanced understanding of victims' internal processing in relation to their needs seems critical. This study aims to contribute to this aspect by scrutinizing victims' storytelling and meaning-making process with regard to their lives of suffering and reconciliation.

Peacebuilding

The literature on peacebuilding also deals with victim-focused practices. As part of local or bottom-up peacebuilding, which centers on local perspectives, history, culture, religion, and everyday lives for peacebuilding strategies, victims are seen as the core element of the practices. Concerning the broader peacebuilding literature, critical theorists contend that conventional peacebuilding to maintain stability, security, or deterrence from the probability of violence has been foreign and insensitive to complex local situations.[249] Empirical evidence has shown that the most affected and vulnerable groups in post-conflict and deeply divided societies experience exclusion and marginalization from traditional peacebuilding. Scholars have thus begun to develop the peacebuilding process more effectively and inclusively, with bottom-up approaches, locality, participation and lived experience.[250]

Nonetheless, there has been little research directly focusing on the voices and roles of victims in the peacebuilding literature. While the mainstream discourse of peacebuilding focuses on hybridity between the global and the local, victims are insufficiently recognized as the core element of peacebuilding. Only a few scholars pay attention to the position of victims in the 'everyday' peacebuilding, underlying that victims are often ignored as agents for peacebuilding, but are one of the critical elements in building peace and promoting reconciliation as they have experienced violence.[251] According to these literatures, victims' voices rooted in their suffering can significantly contribute to the process of dealing with the past and peace processes. The

[249] Oliver Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon England; New York: Routledge, 2011).
[250] SungYong Lee, *Local Ownership in Asian Peacebuilding: Development of Local Peacebuilding Models* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Sung Yong Lee and Alpaslan Özerdem, *Local Ownership in International Peacebuilding: Key Theoretical and Practical Issues* (London: Routledge, 2015); C. R. Mitchell, *Local Peacebuilding and National Peace: Interaction between Grassroots and Elite Processes* (London; New York: Continuum, 2012); Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver P. Richmond, 'The Local Turn in Peace Building: A Critical Agenda for Peace', *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 5 (2013): 763–83; Roger Mac Ginty, 'Where Is the Local? Critical Localism and Peacebuilding', *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 5 (2015): 840–56.
[251] Brewer et al., *The Sociology of Everyday Life Peacebuilding*; John D. Brewer and Bernadette C. Hayes, 'Victims as Moral Beacons: Victims and Perpetrators in Northern Ireland', *Contemporary Social Science* 6, no. 1 (2011): 73–88.

volume by Brewer et al. needs full attention in this regard.[252] Describing the social status of victims as 'absent-presence', which acknowledges victims' existence and suffering and yet places them on the sideline of peace processes, Brewer and his colleagues stress that peacebuilding and its processes, if it is to be sustainable, need to bring victims to the core of the practice, as they have a role to play as a paradigmatic model for social transformation.[253] They examine peacebuilding through the lens of victims' everyday experience and mundane strategies of coping with life challenges. In everyday life, victims routinely experience and try to overcome their suffering by internal reasoning that presents their day to day approach to stressors. Victims' everyday practices are expected to capture the sensitive and complex process of conflict-affected groups' knowledge. Therefore, by looking at victims' mundane reasoning, defenders of peacebuilding can accumulate knowledge of how victims survive throughout their lives of victimization. Furthermore, they argue that victim-centered peacebuilding is oriented to victims' natural attitudes as a mundane source of behavior, because natural attitudes "give focus away from the suffering of the self, caused by the victimhood experience, forcing attention on the accomplishment of these very same routines".[254] Through their everyday reasoning, the stock of knowledge provides the way of coping with their bitterness and grievances, protects them from the further victimization, and organizes the sense of their social world, mobilizing natural attitude.[255] From this perspective, Brewer et al. investigate victims' narratives as a form of giving a voice in the contexts of Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, and South Africa. In the three cases, the researchers have found positive implications for victim-centered peacebuilding. Most victims express hope-driven narratives and further justification for forgiveness and reconciliation as an essential step for making a peaceful society. Although the experience of victimhood and ongoing injustice impede victims from becoming involved in peacebuilding, their perspectives show a transformative potential.

The everyday peacebuilding literature accounts for the contribution of victims' natural attitudes to peacebuilding: how victims' daily reasoning and attitudes can be the sources of peacebuilding in deeply divided societies. The present research associates with this perspective on victims' attitude, emerging from daily reasoning. Rooted in the belief that victims' internal processing and accumulated knowledge are the fundamental sources for victim-oriented reconciliation practices, this research focuses on victims' narrative reasoning for reconciliation.

[252] Brewer et al., *The Sociology of Everyday Life Peacebuilding*.
[253] Ibid, 14.
[254] Ibid, 220.
[255] Ibid, 215.

Peace Education

Some literature on peace education evaluates the roles of victims of political violence as peace educators.[256] As scholars in peace education see that education is a critical component of transforming narratives and memory, leading post-conflict societies to reconciliation,[257] they investigate victims of violence as an effective instrument to build peace, when they tell their stories in the public school curriculum. Amongst others, Irazuzta et al. conducted an educational program, "Victims as Educators" focusing on the effect of sentimental peace education, when victims testified about their experiences of violence in the Basque country.[258] In their analysis, victims' narratives of suffering from their testimonies showed a great potential for sentimental education. They found that victims' testimonies appealed to the pre-political sentiment, advocating the values of human rights, humanity, and forgiveness by addressing the evil of violence. In the educational setting, victims played a guiding role in raising public recognition of the possibility of forgiveness, overcoming hatred, and coexistence. In the educational arena, victims established sufficient ground for building a moral community.

Victim-centeredness in the peace education sector is hardly researched. To the best of my knowledge, it is a new research venue in peace education literature. Victims are capable of playing the role of public educator as their stories and testimonies are recognized as an instrument for raising public awareness of human rights, humanity, and forgiveness in post-conflict contexts. Therefore, what kinds of educational function victims can have in society would be compelling evidence of victim-centered reconciliation. Research findings of this study respond to this perspective as will be discussed in the finding chapters.

3.3 Thematic Literature Two: Victims, Suffering and Morality

The second theme of the literature is the use of victims' suffering and morality. This study's focus on victims and reconciliation has something to do with an assumption that victims' moral behaviors arising from their suffering can play a transformative role in promoting reconciliation in post-conflict environments. Thus, it is necessary to survey the relationship between victims' suffering and morality. Previous researches tends to believe that victims of violent conflict can be

[256] Ignacio Irazuzta, Silvia Rodr ıguez Maeso, and Adriana M. Villalón, '"Victims as Educators": Sentimental Education in a Peace-Building Context', *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 9 (2017): 50–67.
[257] Bernadette C. Hayes and Ian McAllister, 'Education as a Mechanism for Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland', *Oxford Review of Education* 35, no. 4 (2009): 437–50; Hernando Barrios-Tao, José María Siciliani-Barraza, and Bibiana Bonilla-Barrios, 'Education Programs in Post-Conflict Environments: A Review from Liberia, Sierra Leone, and South Africa', *Revista Electronic@ Educare* 21, no. 1 (2016): 1–22.
[258] Irazuzta, Maeso, and Villalón, '"Victims as Educators"'.

moral beacons, having altruistic behaviors and concerns, which contribute to social transformation and building peace.[259] This section investigates this aspect. By reviewing this body of literature, I highlight the transformative potential of the victims' perspective on reconciliation. It includes altruism born of suffering and victims' beliefs and consciousness.

Altruism Born of Suffering

A group of psychologists have studied victims' altruistic prosocial behaviors and meaning-making arising from suffering. Theorists assume that victims have an altruistic tendency towards other victims or society that is rooted in their experience of suffering; that is, altruism born of suffering (ABS). Scholars define ABS as victims' deep and prosocial commitment to preventing future suffering and the pursuit of healing of the self and social transformation through empathetic meaning after traumatic events such as mass killing and terrorist attacks.[260] Staub and Vollhardt have suggested that victims' deeper understanding of the roots of violence and victimization may nurture altruistic mindsets towards other victims at the time of suffering.[261] Victims tend to have a greater awareness of others' suffering and humanity when they become resilient from post-traumatic stress. According to their studies, victims tend to show a prosocial role, taking care of other victims and social well-being. Based on experimental research, Staub and Vollhardt have argued that victims' ABS increases when victims become empowered through psychological changes, including a revived self-concept, autonomy, connection and sympathy to other victims, and a broader understanding of the world surrounding them.[262]

Following the notion of ABS, some literature proved it in post-conflict environments: how victims and survivors of mass killing come to be resilient and devote themselves to reducing further violence and transforming unjust social structure. Hernández-Wolfe investigated the altruistic tendency emerging from victimized human rights activists in Colombia using grounded theory.[263] She found that these activists possessed a high level of resilience when they revived their self-

[259] Breen-Smyth, *Truth Recovery and Justice after Conflict,* 75*;* Marie Breen-Smyth, 'Putting the Past in Its Place: Issues of Victimhood and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland's Peace Process', in *Burying the Past: Making Peace and Doing Justice after Civil Conflict*, ed. Nigel Biggar (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 125–54; Breen-Smyth, 'The Uses of Suffering; Brewer and Hayes, 'Victims as Moral Beacons'.
[260] Ervin Staub, *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults, and Groups Help and Harm Others* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Ervin Staub and Johanna Vollhardt, 'Altruism Born of Suffering: The Roots of Caring and Helping After Victimization and Other Trauma', *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 78, no. 3 (2008): 267–80; Johanna Ray Vollhardt, 'Altruism Born of Suffering and Prosocial Behavior Following Adverse Life Events: A Review and Conceptualization', *Social Justice Research* 22 (2009): 53–97.
[261] Staub and Vollhardt, 'Altruism Born of Suffering'; Vollhardt, 'Altruism Born of Suffering and Prosocial Behavior Following Adverse Life Events'.
[262] Staub and Vollhardt; Vollhardt.
[263] Pilar Hernández-Wolfe, 'Altruism Born of Suffering: How Colombian Human Rights Activists Transform Pain Into Prosocial Action', *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 51, no. 2 (2011): 229–49.

identity as an inclusive member of society, and this led them to their altruistic actions for working for justice and rebuilding the society after traumatic events. Moreover, their meaning-making as well as healing process increased their altruistic mindsets. Taylor and Hanna reported empathy-related ABS in intergroup relations in the protracted Northern Ireland conflict, focusing on emerging adults in society.[264] They found that having empathy with victims of conflict promoted individuals' desire to help intergroup relations. Mironova and Whitt conducted experimental research in the context of postwar Kosovo, concentrating on how the level of contact between former adversaries increased the norm of altruism towards each other.[265] They proved that close proximity between outgroups enhances empathetic attitudes, and increases altruism. Judging from the results, they argue that altruism with empathy may bring about further social goals such as social integration, tolerance and reconciliation after violent conflict.[266]

In sum, the literature on ABS demonstrates that victims have the potential to act as agents for altruistic behavior regarding their suffering. Vollhardt presented that victims' altruistic minds develop through their autonomous reasoning of their suffering and self-conception. This sheds light on victims' ability to interpret their suffering and association of it with altruistic vision of society. This perspective on victims' suffering, despite limited empirical studies, gives a critical motivation for this study, which pays attention to victims' internal reasoning to reconciliation as a moral value. To study this, these literatures underline that grasping victims' minds and self-conception in the presence of their suffering is essential to know how they come to produce the altruistic meaning of reconciliation.

Victims' Belief and Consciousness

In a similar vein to ABS, another area of scholarship has demonstrated the positive roles of constructive victim beliefs or inclusive consciousness for intergroup attitudes and peacebuilding in conflictual societies. While victims' suffering and victimhood are generally assumed to create hostility and antagonism in intergroup relations, recent scholars have emphasized the opportunity of sustainable peace through promoting victim beliefs in and consciousness of a comprehensive understanding of the past evil and victimization by all parties.[267] Vollhardt

[264] Laura K. Taylor and Jeffrey R. Hanna, 'Altruism Born of Suffering among Emerging Adults in Northern Ireland', *Journal of Aggression, Conflict, and Peace Research* 10, no. 3 (2017): 157–69.
[265] Vera Mironova and Sam Whitt, 'Ethnicity and Altruism After Violence: The Contact Hypothesis in Kosovo', *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 1, no. 2 (2014): 170–80.
[266] Ibid, 178.
[267] Johanna Ray Vollhardt, 'The Role of Victim Beliefs in the Israel-Palestine Conflict: Risk of Potential for Peace?', *Peace and Conflict* 15 (2009): 135–59; Johanna Ray Vollhardt and Rezarta Bilali, 'The Role of Inclusive and Exclusive Victim Consciousness in Predicting Intergroup Attitudes: Findings from Rwanda, Burundi, and DRC', *Political Psychology* 36,

theoretically points out that conventional attempts at peace activism were to reduce victims' belief and memories of victimization, but that this is neither sustainable nor ethical.[268] Instead, she argued, victims have a possibility to be aware of others' suffering and recognize other groups' identities, may have empathy and so rehumanize other victims. Victims are also capable of listening to other victims' personal stories that raise awareness of their similarities.

In line with this perspective, some researchers have paid attention to how inclusive victims' perception or belief referring to a mutual understanding of victimization on both sides promotes peace-related meaning and actions. For example, Shnabel et al. conducted a quantitative analysis of Palestinians and Israelis who had lost family members in the conflict, to prove the assumption that victims, bereaved family members and their collective victimhood can play a role in promoting reconciliation and related peace activism.[269] Using online questionnaires answered by those who attended the Israeli-Palestinian Memorial ceremony in 2015, they proved that the constructive role of personal victimization and collective victimhood in peace activism in protracted conflict is viable, whereas perpetrator identity has no contribution to make. To support this finding, they explained that the psychological process of perpetrators is not as profound as that of victims, who associate rather with intergroup reconciliation.[270] In the same context, Noor et al. found that victims' inclusive perception promotes their altruistic behaviors [271] and contributes to the willingness to forgive.[272] More research has been conducted in some African countries in the Great Lakes region,[273] India,[274] and Northern Ireland.[275] These studies commonly found that inclusive victim perception has the meaningful possibility of leading to intergroup reconciliation and forgiveness, whereas exclusive victim consciousness is linked to negative intergroup attitudes such as competitive victimhood and mistrust. Also, victims' inclusive beliefs present less willingness to punish perpetrators concerning peaceful settlement.[276] The literature of inclusive victim beliefs underlines that victims have empathy and a shared sense of humanity with other victims of violent conflict, as well as moral superiority over perpetrators or ex-

no. 5 (2015): 489–506; Johanna Ray Vollhardt, Rashmi Nair, and Linda R. Tropp, 'Inclusive Victim Consciousness Predicts Minority Group Members' Support for Refugees and Immigrants', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 46 (2016): 356–68.

[268] Vollhardt, 'The Role of Victim Beliefs in the Israel-Palestine Conflict'

[269] Nurit Shnabel, Yaniv Belhassen, and Shira Mor, 'From Victimhood to Peace Activism: The Potential Role of Personal Loss and Inclusive Victim Beliefs', *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 21, no. 8 (2018): 1144–54.

[270] Shnabel, Belhassen, and Mor, 1150.

[271] Vollhardt, 'The Role of Victim Beliefs in the Israel-Palestine Conflict'.

[272] Masi Noor et al., 'Peace Vision and Its Socio-Emotional Antecedents: The Role of Forgiveness, Trust, and Inclusive Victim Perceptions', *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 18, no. 5 (2015): 644–54.

[273] Vollhardt and Bilali, 'The Role of Inclusive and Exclusive Victim Consciousness in Predicting Intergroup Attitudes'.

[274] Vollhardt, Nair, and Tropp, 'Inclusive Victim Consciousness Predicts Minority Group Members' Support for Refugees and Immigrants'.

[275] John D. Brewer and Bernadette C. Hayes, 'Victimization and Attitudes Towards Former Political Prisoners in Northern Ireland', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27, no. 4 (2015): 741–61.

[276] Ibid.

combatants, and these influence victims' perception of positive social roles.[277]

Meanwhile, regarding studying their moral perception or meaning-making, scholars examine victims' storytelling and personal narratives, through which they describe lived experience of victimization. As storytelling is regarded as a constructive apparatus, which enables victims to reflect on their lives of suffering, self-recognition, and the social world, scholars delve into their detailed stories to obtain qualitative data of the moral aspect. While most studies argue that storytelling is essential for healing victims and raising public recognition, there are a limited number of studies focusing on victims' stories of suffering relating to moral perspectives. Furman, for example, raised the question of what can be learnt from bereaved family members' storytelling in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[278] She reported victims' storytelling in a dialogic setting from both sides, describing that victims' shared narratives tend to lead to reconciliation as a moral imperative. She found that although telling personal stories remembering the death of the loved one is a painful process, victims claim their suffering and increase the level of empathy over other victims while telling their stories.[279]

This research on victims' belief and perception is also relevant for this thesis. Together with literatures on ABS, what the outcomes of these studies explain is that victims have a high potential for peace-related actions and values based on a broader understanding of violence, and their own and others' suffering. The present study corresponds to this line of victims' constructive roles in deeply divided societies, contributing reconciliation in the case of South Korean victims of political violence.

3.4 Contextual Literature: Victim Issues in South Korea

The last section of this chapter reviews literature on victim issues in South Korea. While attentions to victim issues in PACS have burgeoned over recent decades, it has scarcely been discussed in the context of South Korea. Scholars exploring the issues of victims pay attention to psychological impact and stress, social suffering, healing through telling, and reconciliation, which overlap with some discussion in PACS. Although there is a limited number of studies, it is worthwhile understanding how these issues are examined in the South Korean context.

[277] Vollhardt, 'The Role of Victim Beliefs in the Israel-Palestine Conflict'.
[278] Frida Kerner Furman, 'Bereavement, Storytelling, and Reconciliation: Peacebuilding Between Israelis and Palestinians', *Peace and Conflict Studies* 20, no. 2 (2013): 125–51.
[279] Ibid.

Psychological Impact and Stress

There is some literature on victims' psychological impact and stress in the aftermath of political violence. This mainly focus on victims of the Jeju 4.3 incident, the 5.18 Gwangju People's Uprising, and civilian massacres in the Korean War.[280] The Psychological Damage Report published by the TRCK brought to light a general symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in victims of political violence.[281] This report addresses the issue of victims who were tortured and survived, or who were threatened by armed forces, and their struggles with traumatic memory, which caused mental shock, suicide, and emotional instability. Shin et al.'s analysis shows that the level of PTSD is higher in bereaved families than in those of the wounded and the arrested.[282] The report by Oh and his colleagues provides victims' overall living conditions and the aftermath of the 5.18 People's Uprising.[283] Using a qualitative method, researchers found that victims suffer from diverse life challenges, including physical, mental, and economic hardships, which cause a high level of stress. An important finding of the research was that although public recognition of victims has grown, social support has been limited and inconsistent.[284] Instead, individual victims tended to rely more on personal coping strategies than external support. The report also emphasizes that not only economic and physical support but also life stress and mental disorder are urgent issues for those who were victimized in the long term. Moreover, Oh and Shin have investigated psychological conditions of 3.11 victims, focusing on how individual life stress, coping strategy and social support are related to victims' PTSD and mental health.[285] Life stress such as low income and physical sequelae increase the psychological stress, and low levels of social support increase stress. Importantly, they have found that passive coping, which means a self-directed way of dealing with stressors, is more efficient in minimizing the level of PTSD and mental suffering, rather than relying on external sources. Jeong et al. conducted a quantitative study, examining the psychological trauma of 406 individual victims of state violence before and during the Korean War in 2015.[286] About 96.6 per cent of the participants experienced

[280] Hye-Rang Shin et al., 'Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Victims of Gwangju Democratic Uprising: In Seoul/Gyeonggi and Cheon-Nam Regions', *J Korean Assoc Soc Psychiatry* 16, no. 2 (2011): 57–65; Soo-Sung Oh and Hyun-Kyun Shin, 'The Relationships between the Life Stress, Coping and Perceived Social Support and the Posttraumatic Stress and the Mental Health of 518 Victims', *Korean Journal of Clinical Psychology* 27, no. 3 (2008): 595–611; Soo-Sung Oh, 'State Violence and Trauma', *Journal of Democracy and Human Rights* 13, no. 1 (2013): 5–12.
[281] TRC, 'Report for Psychological Damage'.
[282] Shin et al., 'Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Victims of Gwangju Democratic Uprising: In Seoul/Gyeonggi and Cheon-Nam Regions'.
[283] Soo-Sung Oh, 'Research report on Democratic Merit's Living Status and Sequelae' (Gwangju: The May 18 Memorial Foundation, 2006).
[284] Ibid.
[285] Oh and Shin, 'The Relationships between the Life Stress, Coping and Perceived Social Support and the Posttraumatic Stress and the Mental Health of 518 Victims'.
[286] Jeong et al., 'A Study on Psychological Trauma of Victim and Victim's Families Due to State Violence before and during

psychological pain, including emotional disorder in the forms of repressed anger and social phobia. About 19.5 per cent of the participants, most of whom were children of the deceased, exhibited PTSD. The same research also found that the psychological suffering is intensified with their low levels of social recognition and exclusion as well as poor economic living conditions. It suggests that reparations and truth-finding are recommended to ameliorate their suffering.

These literatures prove that victims of political violence in South Korea commonly suffer from diverse forms of stress. They also show that limited professional support has been offered to individual victims, and so victims have had to live with self-directed coping strategies. While these studies argued that professional support should be increased, there is no research focusing on victims' self-mechanisms living with their suffering in the aftermath of political violence: how effective and sustainable they are to cope with stress. This study contributes to this lack of knowledge by examining victims' narrative processing of making sense of their suffering and re-directing the self-recognition in the midst of suffering in their autobiographical narratives.

Social Suffering

In the meantime, some scholars have focused on victims' suffering for sociological investigations. Amongst others, Choi analyzed victims' social suffering after the 5.18 Gwangju Uprising.[287] In his article, victims' suffering at the social level is closely linked to physical suffering, and is prolonged by their poor social, educational and economic conditions. Chronic social suffering is the direct cause of psychological trauma. What is critical to note from his analysis is that victims' interpretation of the past event is influential to the degree to which personal trauma and social suffering are generated and sustained. Kim and Kim's qualitative study of five victims of state violence has shown that victims' social suffering comes from the sense of non-citizens, fear of original sin, and the continuation of violence.[288] The participants stated that their negative life experiences were due to social indifference and amnesia about them. Thus, social memory is critical for victims to be part of society. In a similar vein, Han noticed that victims experience a feeling of death, of a departed being, and original sin as a result of social suffering.[289] Regarding victims' social suffering, he argues, human languages might not be able to express victims' suffering adequately. Therefore, it is important to understand that personal narratives expressing

the Korean War'.
[287] Jung-Gie Choi, 'The State Violence and the Mechanism of Making Trauma in the Case of the Victims of 518 People's Uprising', *Economy and Society* 77 (2008): 58–78.
[288] Kim and Kim, 'A Case Study on the Victims under State Implication System - Surviving as Eternal Fugitives'.
[289] Han, 'Severe Human Rights Abuses and State Violence'.

feeling and understanding of the world are a key instrument for approaching their suffering.

Although there is limited research, these studies have an important insight for this study. As both Choi and Han note, victims' subjective interpretation of their suffering expressed in their life narratives is vital to understand how victims make sense of their social world and refine who they are in the presence of ongoing social discrimination. They found out that victims do not always rely on the sense of victimhood but try to develop their identity to overcome trauma from bereavement, providing meanings for their lives and for the death of the family members. It stresses that victims are meaning seekers, pursuing resilience in their lives after violence in a way to make their lives meaningful. The current study develops this perspective on victims by paying attention to their narratives, which describe their lives of suffering. In doing so, I look at the way victims interpret the past, present, and future in the aftermath of civilian massacres.

Healing through Telling

A group of oral historians have noticed a therapeutic function of telling personal life stories to minimize victims' trauma in South Korea. Eom argues that telling encourages narrators to make sense of what they tell and remember and to generate meaning from the emplotment, and thereby feel catharsis.[290] Through the act of telling, not only individuals but also the collective can be free from suppressed memory. Acknowledging the therapeutic function, scholars argue that oral history emancipates victims' traumatic memories[291] and provides them with an opportunity for self-reflection.[292] Amongst others, Kim focuses on the function of storytelling to empower victims of political violence.[293] Reflecting on the TRCK truth-finding activities, he argues that storytelling is an empowering tool for victims. Whereas testimonies aim to discover factual truth in the past, storytelling enables victims not only to manage their trauma but also to develop the subjectivity of selfhood. In telling their stories, victims portray their life experience and describe themselves as the protagonists of their own life, generating personal narratives. When they do so, Kim argues, victims confess their suffering, fear, and make meaning of the past, present, and future.[294] These studies developed further how victims' autobiographical narrative and storytelling play an

[290] Chan-Ho Eom, 'History and Healing - Centered on the Modern History of the South Korea', *Studies in Humanities* 29 (2011): 401–29.
[291] Gwi-Ok Kim, 'Oral History and Healing - For the Possibility of Healing Trauma', *The Journal of the Humanities of Unification* 55 (2013): 131–65; Hye-Rim Song, 'The Resignification of an Emotion and the Emancipation of the Memory with Examination of the Victims Testimony of 4.3', *Journal of Koreanology* 70 (2019): 251–78.
[292] Taek-Lim Yoon, 'Oral History Interview and Historical Trauma: Possibility for Combining the Task of Seeking Truths with Healing Historical Wounds', *Studies in Humanities* 30 (2011): 381–406.
[293] Moo-Yong Kim, 'The Truth-Telling and Formation of Counter-Narrative Subject during Past Liquidation in Korea', *The Journal of Korean History* 153 (2011): 191–237.
[294] Ibid.

emancipatory role for victims of political violence in overcoming their trauma. Scholars have argued that the storytelling process prompts victims to remember their past, to realize who they are now, and to generate meaning from their stories, as well as for the future.

These scholars underline that victims as subjective story-tellers emancipate themselves from the suppressed memory and official narratives and fill their lives with meaningful stories in the South Korean context. In particular, Kim's analysis has critical implications for this study. According to Kim, victims of mass killing in South Korea are no longer passive beings in the social sphere, but rather create their subjectivity as social actors by sharing their experiences of marginalization in the process of storytelling. This study is in line with these works of literature in that victims are subjective agents capable of telling their stories and developing meaning in their lives, and thereby overcome their suffering. Building upon the narrative approach to the self, identity, and meaning-making, this study aims to investigate how victims make sense of life experiences by expressing their suffering and the self, and build some meaning for reconciliation in their autobiographical stories. It is hoped that it contributes not only to victims' self-management of suffering but also to their subjective meanings of reconciliation.

Reconciliation

As for reconciliation, only a small number of scholars have paid attention to ways of promoting reconciliation in the aftermath of political violence in South Korea. In the case of such violence during the Korean War, reconciliation is approached in two different ways: reconciliation between communities and between the state and civilians. Because civilian massacres before and during the war were not only state-led violence but also strife between communities, in which both rightist and leftists groups killed each other, scholars argue that reconciliation ought to have a multilateral approach.[295] To this end, Lee suggests differentiating between individual and political reconciliation.[296] He contends that individual or community reconciliation anchoring restorative justice that focuses on the broken relationship between the stakeholders misinterprets the task of the political level of reconciliation. What he argues is that reconciliation after genocidal events in the context of the Cold War must rebuild a reflective political community in which not only victims and perpetrators are reconciled, but also ordinary citizens consciously refuse war politics and therefore guarantee the deterrence of the same violence.

[295] Geun-Sik Jung, 'Truth and Reconciliation, Where Are We Now?', *Hwanghae Review*, 2010, 86–119.
[296] Jae-Seung Lee, 'Grammar of Reconciliation', *Minju-Bubhak* 46 (2011): 123–58.

One case study on the community level of reconciliation was conducted. Choi and Yang conducted some research on reconciliation in a village called 'Gulim', where communal violence between rightist and leftist villagers resulted in about 300 casualties during the Korean War.[297] According to the authors, villagers have undertaken transformative steps to recovering the wounds of the town, writing the village's shared national history, participating in memorial services, and erecting a memorial tower in the middle of the village. The researchers found that reconciliation was possible because truth as a precondition of reconciliation was recognized, and villagers mutually understood the historical circumstances of war and violence and refrained from the dichotomy of victims and perpetrators.[298] Another study on reconciliation from the victims' perspective was conducted. Eom observes that reconciliation requires a healing process for victims, and an apologetic process from the state, and offenders may foster reconciliation and even forgiveness.[299] Not only a consistent governmental apology but also apologies from direct offenders are essential for victims to consider forgiveness and reconciliation.

As seen here, the literature on reconciliation is significantly limited although the term is widely used. In particular, there is a paucity of research on the role reconciliation plays in society in the case of political violence and victims. Only one study presented victims' perspectives on reconciliation. Acknowledging these limitations, this study focuses on victims' perspective on reconciliation by investigating their autobiographical narratives. As noted above, the narrative approach seems critical to examine how victims make sense of the world of oppression and develop their selfhood. Storytelling-centered narratives give rise to opportunities to look at their way of understanding reconciliation in the midst of suffering.

3.5 Synthesis of Research Gaps

Throughout this chapter, I have presented that victims of violent conflict have come to the centre of discussions on reconciliation and related areas within PACS. Scholars have paid significant attention to their voices and roles in building sustainable peace. To date, a wide number of theorists and practitioners have produced theoretical and empirical data, that focus on the roles of victims in reconciliation, transitional justice, peacebuilding and peace education in post-conflict societies. Moreover, psychologists have paid attention to some moral aspects of victims

[297] Jung-Gie Choi and Ra-Yoon Yang, 'What Reconciliation: Beyond Offenders and Victims - the Case of Gulim Village', *Hwanghae Review* 67 (2010): 69–85; Seoung-Ok Park, 'How Is the Gulim Village Being Reconciled?', *Korean Journal of Genocide Studies* 4 (2008): 255–83.
[298] Choi and Yang, 'What Reconciliation'.
[299] Chan-Ho Eom, 'For the Massacre of Civilians in the Korean War, Anger and Healing', *Studies in Humanities* 36 (2013): 585–607.

out of their suffering in peace-prone behavior and belief. Regarding these studies, I have kept suggesting one core question: that is, how do victims' subjective perspectives on life and suffering contribute to reconciliation, the social goal of sustainble peace.

To justify this study reflecting previous research, two points are critical. First, scholars tend to see victims as vulnerable, passive, and objective while they argue for victims' subjective roles in peacebuilding practices. Most studies on victim issues and victim-centeredness seem to have been conducted under this common perception rather than seeing them as subjective agents that behave subjectively in the aftermath of violence or conflict. This discrepancy results in a homogenous conclusion from different research contexts, arguing that victims are ubiquitously vulnerable and need external support. Rather, there needs to be a shared recognition that victims can be resilient by means of their own self-directed mechanism. As many researchers have addressed, victims live by their perspectives of the self and their suffering by autonomously interpreting what has happened in the past through mundane reasoning. The subjective perspective gives them freedom, ownership, and renewed selfhood. To perceive victims as subjective agents, a broader vision of peacebuilding strategies needs to identify with victims' internal processing of interpretation and meaning-making that modulates their voices and behaviors.

Second, to the best of my knowledge, numerous studies on victims' role have been conducted mainly with quantitative methodologies. A large number of victim-centered studies used quantitative methodology to 'measure' meanings that victims provide. However, whereas these studies effectively showed the overall tendency, there is little known about how and why victims become altruistic and concerned with reconciliation and wider social concerns. Instead, a qualitative analysis may present a thick description of their voice and narratives, which are embedded in complex life experience. As part of qualitative study, this research concentrate on victims' autobiographical narratives on suffering and reconciliation. If victims' subjectivity emerges from their interpretation of life, suffering and the self, understanding their voices and narratives describing their experience is critical. This subjectivity can be viewed in their storytelling. As subjective authors, victims tell their own stories, and in doing so, they narrate who they are and what they can do, based on their experience as victims of violence.

Following these critical points, I would like to synthesize knowledge gaps emerging from each section of review.

a) Conventional studies on post-conflict reconciliation present diverse approaches to the notion, its dimensions, and elements. The concerns of victims, however, are somewhat limited in

theoretical discussions. While scholars have extensively focused on the psychosocial aspect of the relationship building between victims and perpetrators and empowerment of victims from their suffering and trauma, what victims can bring to the process of reconciliation needs more research. Scholars have paid attention to institutional and professional support for victims' healing and restoration, whereas research on victims' perspective to reconciliation lack its empirical data. Therefore, there is limited knowledge of the empirical linkage between reconciliation and victims in post-conflict environments.

b) Most literature on victims-centeredness concerning reconciliation can be found in the literature of transitional justice. However, in this literature, the theme of victim-centeredness is somewhat partial. Scholars in TJ have a strong perception to portray victims as passive beneficiaries of professional or institutional support. They assume that victims have various needs, and TJ practices must be practiced in a way to meet these in order to achieve reconciliation. Indeed, a number of empirical case studies has proven this. However, this approach, ironically, minimizes space for victims in implementing TJ for reconciliation. That is to say, despite the importance of the needs approach, overall discussion of TJ brings about unintended outcomes, such that scholars instrumentalize victims' voices to prove their epistemological assumption about victims, and subjugate victims' voices to elite-led and institution-driven practices. This current study is motivated by this realization about victim-centeredness and intends to contribute to the victims' subjective point of view on reconciliation in the absence of institutional support.

c) There are some studies examining the functions of victims within the literature on peacebuilding and peace education. Unlike those of TJ, the literature in both fields has shown a strong interest in victims' subjective role in practice. Peacebuilding literature presents the salience of understanding victims' daily lives and narratives to understand their roles. Peace education literature has shown evidence that peace education can be effective in nurturing the sense of human rights, humanity, and the like when victims of violence testify their lived experience of victimization, on the one hand, and present redemptive sentiments on the other. Although this literature has revealed such positive outcomes, there needs to be further research on both topics. The current study does not directly deal with peace education and only partially with peacebuilding, but may contribute to this literature, by exploring the broader theme of reconciliation.

d) Some literature has shown victims' altruistic behavior and moral beliefs arising from their suffering, and their roles in peace-prone practices. This literature demonstrates that victims' moral perspective gives rise to a positive function in the aftermath of violent conflict. However, there is little research on how victims come to have altruistic minds and generative motivation in post-conflict situations. Also, many researchers in this aspect have conducted

quantitative studies, failing to discover in-depth knowledge of victims' internal justification of moral or altruistic behavior. This study responds to victims' internal processing of defending reconciliation as a moral value, using a qualitative narrative methodology.

e) The literature on victim issues in the South Korean context presents the growing interest in victims' suffering and healing. While most literature has focused on various pains that victims have experienced, some scholars have developed victims' empowerment centered on storytelling. These works show that victims feel empowered when they tell personal stories as a private coping mechanism, which is more effective than external support. Although this literature supports this thesis' approach to understand victims' suffering, there is no research focusing on the victims' perspective on reconciliation in society. This study, therefore, explores the nuanced dynamic of victims' meaning-making on reconciliation deriving from their understanding of their lives of suffering and self-recognition by examining their autobiographical narratives.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the previous literature.. As this research aims to explore victims' subjective meaning-making of reconciliation based on their experiences of suffering, I first surveyed the general discussion of post-conflict reconciliation. Starting from these broad approaches, this research aims to contribute to victim' voices from a bottom-up perspective on reconciliation. Second, I paid attention to the theme of victim-centeredness in PACS because this greatly concerns victims' subjectivity. I have judged that scholars in this field still have a strong perception that victims are objective and passive, and subjective to institutional support although they argue that victims' subjectivity is critical to reconciliation. Therefore, this study aims to adopt a more subjective perspective on victims, and to defend narrative reasoning for meaning reconciliation and the related values. Next, I also reviewed some literature on victims and morality. These works of literature presented the view that victims have a great potential for altruistic behavior, and that their moral values indeed promote peace-prone activities. Last, victim issues in South Korea were also reviewed. Although academic concerns for victims is narrow in peace studies, victims have been a subject of a wide variety of literature. Whereas most literature about South Korea focuses on victim support and psychological healing, there is a significant lack of research on the roles of victims in reconciliation and peace in society. Based on research gaps addressed in this chapter, I have conducted this study using a qualitative narrative inquiry design.

Chapter 4
Methodology

> As a narrative inquirer, I enter into research in the midst of my own life, in the midst of participants' lives, and in the midst of institutional, familiar, linguistic, and social narratives. I engage for a time, over time, with participants, either alongside them in the living of their lives and in their telling of stories, or only as they tell their stories.
>
> D. Jean Clandinin, 2013[300]

The research questions of this study premise that individual victims of political violence make sense of their life experiences of victimization, and acts based on discovered meanings through the autobiographical process. Regarding the research outline, this chapter provides this study's methods and research design. As this research aims to investigate personal narratives as an empirical resource deemed to reflect life experience as a form of a life story, examining informants' autobiographical narratives requires an adequate methodology tailored to conduct narrative research. As a piece of qualitative research, this study adopts narrative inquiry as the central research methodology, explained in the two sections of this chapter. First, I will provide a general explanation and justification of narrative inquiry in this research. The ontological and epistemological positions of this study explain why narrative inquiry best suits the research questions. Second, I delineate the research design, managing the practical issues in collecting and analyzing data. Trustworthiness and ethical issues in conducting narrative research will be dealt with thereafter. At the end of this chapter, I will also clarify some methodological limitations.

4.1 Choosing Narrative Inquiry as a Qualitative Methodology

This research justified from the review of the previous studies requires qualitative knowledge. As I aim to provide nuanced explanations for how individual victims of political violence narrate their life stories and suffering in order to produce adaptive yet subjective meaning for reconciliation in South Korea, examining the victims' internal mechanism in the qualitative manner is appropriate. As a field of inquiry, qualitative research explains the social world and particular phenomena therein qualitatively with a variety of techniques such as physical

[300] D. Jean Clandinin, *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2013), 203.

participation, observation and reflective interpretations.[301] Unlike quantitative research, which attempts to test hypotheses by controlling variables, qualitative studies do not merely prove assumptions, but rather seek descriptive analyses by directly and indirectly being located in and exposed to the social context being examined.[302] There are many forms of qualitative studies, including case study, narrative research, ethnography, phenomenology, and grounded theory, all of which pursue thick descriptions of the research subjects.[303] In these studies, researchers gather data through a family of inquiries such as interviews, field notes, conversations, and field recordings. By making use of such techniques, qualitative researchers implement in-depth investigations to find meanings and patterns of human behavior in the natural setting of human life.[304] In this sense, Creswell defines qualitative research as below.

> Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patters or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action.[305]

Drawing upon this sense of qualitative methodology, I chose narrative inquiry for this research. Narrative inquiry was most suitable for the investigation of individual victims' life stories and their narrative processing for meaning-making. A wide number of commentators agree that narrative inquiry is a narrative form of inquiry into human lives emerging from personal and social stories.[306] As Webster and Mertova describe,

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[301] Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 'Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research', in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Norman K. Lincoln, 4th ed. (London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2011), 1–20; Monique M. Hennick, Ajay Bailey, and Inge Hutter, *Qualitative Research Methods* (London ; Thousand Oaks; California.: SAGE, 2011); Jerry Willis, *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretive and Critical Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2007); John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2007).
[302] Gretchen B. Rossman and Sharon F. Rallis, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research: Learning in the Field*, Fourth edition. (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2017).
[303] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*; Willis, *Foundations of Qualitative Research*.
[304] Denzin and Lincoln, 'Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research'; Hennick, Bailey, and Hutter, *Qualitative Research Methods*; Willis, *Foundations of Qualitative Research*; Rossman and Rallis, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*.
[305] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design,* 44.
[306] Clandinin, *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*; Leonard Webster and Patricie Mertova, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a*

> Narrative inquiry is human-centered in that it captures and analyses life stories. In doing this, it has the ability to document critical life events in illuminating detail, and yet also reveal holistic views, qualities that give stories valuable potential for research. Stories are a reflection of the fact that experience is a matter of growth, and that understandings are continually developed, reshaped, and retold, often informally.[307]

Narrative inquirers, then, locate themselves in the midst of informants' stories for a deeper investigation of human experiences.[308] Being immersed in stories, researchers can access unique and rich data that cannot be obtained from experiments, simple questionnaires, or observations.[309] Although narratives consist of representational stories and are remote from the objective truth of human experience, narrative inquirers consider biographic storytelling and writing as the linguistic representation of human experience. For this reason, biographical narrative inquiry was chosen for the investigation of victims' life stories embedded in their autobiographical narratives told and retold during storytelling and writing.

In this regard, autobiographical and biographical narrative inquiries should be carefully differentiated. Although both narratives refer to personal stories describing individual life experience, they indicate different subjects of research. Whereas autobiographical narrative inquiry is one that uses researchers' self-narratives, biographical inquiry investigates respondents' stories and narratives.[310] If the former situates the researcher within the research subject, the latter does not include the researching self but those who are being examined. Thus, as Kim explains, unlike autobiographical narrative inquiry, the biographical form is designed to "explore lived experiences and perspectives that people have of their daily lives, including their past, present, and future, focusing on how they make sense of the meanings they give to the stories they tell."[311]

Research Method: An Introduction to Using Critical Event Narrative Analysis in Research on Learning and Teaching (New York: Routledge, 2007); Connelly and Clandinin, 'Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry'; Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*; Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science*; Amia Lieblich, Rivka Tuval-Mashiach, and Tamar Zilber, *Narrative Research: Reading, Analysis, and Interpretation* (Thousand Oaks; London; New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998).

[307] Webster and Mertova, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method,* 13-4.

[308] Connelly and Clandinin, 'Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry'; Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*; Clandinin, *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*; Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.

[309] Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, *Narrative Research,* 9.

[310] Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.

[311] Ibid, 125.

From this perspective, biographical narrative inquiry as a method offers a positive quality of examining victims' self-understanding in the presence of their experience of victimization and their narrative process of developing meanings for building a just and peaceful society. When individual victims tell and retell their life stories, about which storylines are subjectively composed with their intention to express how they have survived in day-to-day life and made redemptive meaning for social transformation, I as a narrative inquirer am able to link the remembered and composed storylines of suffering to victims' meaning-making through investigating the narrative data. In this way, biographical narrative inquiry allows me to grasp the internalized narrative process of meaning-making emerging from victims' life stories.

4.2 Ontology and Epistemology

To conduct this qualitative study, taking an ontological and epistemological position was paramount in order to lay the foundation of the way of knowledge production. Ontology refers to the nature of being, asking what are there to exist as ontic entities, whereas epistemology refers to the way of perceiving beings.[312] Ontology guides researchers to examine real social life and epistemology concerns the methods of measuring up genuine truth from ontic realities by asking how we come to recognize which ontic entities are the truth.[313] An important fact concerning ontology and epistemology is that there is no clear distinction between the two because ontic entities cannot be real substance outside of human knowledge or perception. Thus, being and knowledge cannot be separately understood, but instead they rely on each other.

Building on this mutual relationship between ontology and epistemology, I conducted this study using constructivism and interpretivism. Constructivists believe that being and knowledge are human products; they are not given to us, but we construct the world through interaction.[314] Following Heidegger's understanding, constructivists hold a view that it is not until we approach the material world and being with our perceived concepts and frames that we can understand them; otherwise they are not a truth to us. For social constructivists, human beings create the social world and make meanings, and social knowledge does not exist unless humans construct meaning with their instruments.[315] What is important in constructivism is that knowledge in the

[312] Dale Jacquette, *Ontology*, Central Problems of Philosophy (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).
[313] Ibid.
[314] Nicholas Onuf, *Making Sense, Making Worlds: Constructivism in Social Theory and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2012); T. A. Schwandt, 'Three Epistemological Stances of Qualitative Inquiry: Interpretivism, Hermeneutics, and Social Constructivism', in *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, vol. 2nd ed (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2003), 292–331.
[315] Onuf, *Making Sense, Making Worlds*.

social world is produced by humans interacting using language.[316] This point of view is intertwined with interpretivism. Epistemologically, interpretivism states that raw materials in the social world become a form of knowledge via researchers' interpretation. Defenders of interpretivism argue that knowledge is never secured or separated from the researcher's social position so that interactional interpretation of data gained from observation of the social phenomena is the constructive way of obtaining knowledge.[317] Thus, interpretivism opposes the perspective of objectivism and naturalism that defends the objectivity of data as the most important value to describe the world as it is without external intervention.

Human Experience as Ontology

In line with constructivism and interpretivism, narrative inquirers particularly recognize human experience as the heart of the ontological and epistemological stance. They tend to draw upon Deweyan understanding of experience, which does not presume precognitive and precultural perception of the world, but sees that the ultimate truth is nothing short of human experience. Unlike the Kantian tradition that perceives that human perception and inquiries are limited in attaining infinite truth from the representation, human experience per se is ontology.[318] In other words, knowledge which takes the form of representations "arises from experience and must return to that experience for their validation."[319] Thus, narratives are the storage of human experience and investigating them is the way of obtaining knowledge. In this sense, Clandinin and Rosiek contend that

> Narratives are the form of representation that describes human experience as it unfolds through time. Therefore, narratives are, arguably, the most appropriate form to use when thinking about inquiry undertaken within a pragmatic framework. Although narrative forms of representation are often used in inquiries framed by other philosophical frameworks, they are, in those cases, almost always regarded as having a degraded epistemic status; if the reality we seek to describe is presumed to be independent of our representations of it, then there is no need to tell the story of

[316] Ibid.; Norman K. Denzin, *Interpretive Interactionism*, 2nd edition (Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2001).
[317] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, trans. Robert Darnton, 3 edition (New York: Basic Books, 2017); Göran Goldkuhl, 'Pragmatism vs Interpretivism in Qualitative Information Systems Research', *European Journal of Information Systems* 21, no. 2 (2012): 135–46; Schwandt, 'Three Epistemological Stances of Qualitative Inquiry: Interpretivism, Hermeneutics, and Social Constructivism'; Denzin, *Interpretive Interactionism*.
[318] D. Jean Clandinin and Jerry Rosiek, 'Mapping a Landscape of Narrative Inquiry: Borderland Spaces and Tensions', in *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*, ed. D. Jean Clandinin (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2012), 35–76.
[319] Ibid, 40.

> how our representation of the world emerged within a stream of experience nor how it returned to that experience.[320]

In this regard, when it comes to the research questions of this study, investigating victims' experiences provides a narrative form of truth. Their autobiographical narratives are original sources of knowledge that are subject to my interpretation. I approach them to discover relevant knowledge for research questions by adequately interpreting them. With the narrative sources of knowledge that represent victims' experiences, the research questions can be responded to.

4.3 Abductive Reasoning and Theorization

Having explained the ontological and epistemological accounts that this research adopts, it is still unclear how ontic entities for this study are transformed into a piece of knowledge. This is a quest for theory, to guide how to analyze the research data. In general, theory refers to a conceptual set which allows researchers to approach research subjects. A theory provides complex and comprehensive understandings of concepts that cannot be precisely specified, giving researchers different "lenses" through which to view complex problems and social issues, and to focus their attention on different aspects of the data providing a framework within which to conduct their analysis.[321] Thus, through theory, researchers are able to build an analytical framework in order to transform raw data into a form of knowledge.

Determining a theory in narrative research is debatable, however. Most narrative researchers do not rely on nor aim to establish a theoretical framework that anticipates a pattern of behavior for natural feature of human experience. They understand that strong theory is not needed in such inquiry because life stories emerging from human experience seem atheoretical, and people do not simply tell their stories resting on a perceived theory.[322] As Clandinin and Connelly state,

> the place of theory in narrative inquiry differs from the place of theory in formalistic inquiry in theory… formalists begin inquiry in theory whereas narrative inquirers tend to begin with experience as lived and told in stories… for narrative inquiry, it is

[320] Ibid, 41.
[321] Scott Reeves et al., 'Qualitative Research: Why Use Theories in Qualitative Research?', *British Medical Journal* 337, no. 7670 (2008): 631–34, 631.
[322] Robert Atkinson, 'The Life Story Interview as a Bridge in Narrative Inquiry', in *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*, ed. D. Jean Clandinin (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2007); Clandinin, *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*; Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*.

> more productive to begin with explorations of the phenomena of experience rather than in comparative analysis of various theoretical methodological frames.[323]

Having noted that, narrative researchers do not necessarily intend an inductive process of explaining data. Other commentators argue that because people do not or cannot tell their whole life story within the comparatively short period of inquiry setting, researchers are unable to patternize their behaviors, and a theory is indispensable, to obtain relevant research outcomes under limited research conditions.[324] Also, stories develop and change in time and space, and the issue of representation of story arises. To capture the meaning of their stories at the moment of inquiry, researchers need to have an explanatory framework to interpret data.[325]

Drawing upon the methodological debates on theorization in narrative inquiries, this study follows abductive reasoning of data analysis that presents a combining process of theorization and data findings. Abductive reasoning is referred to as inference of the best explanation of data.[326] As an alternative form of reasoning, it acknowledges the inseparable relation between observing data and theorizing what has been observed. Abductive reasoning arises due to a realization that theoretical assumptions or hypotheses cannot be made out of observed data, but originate from the discovery of the ordinary experience.[327] In abductive reasoning, the process of observing data and theorizing it, that is, deduction and induction, is an inseparable process from explaining or meaning-making. It recognizes the researchers' dilemma in a tension between data and generalization, whereas neither inductive nor deductive reasoning properly does so.[328] Therefore, abductive reasoning does not sever the process of observing, analyzing and theorizing data, but regard them as a holistic process or a creative inferential process, in order to explain the perceived world. Following abductive reasoning, researchers move back and forth between observing and theorizing the data.[329] Theories in research based on abductive reasoning do not propose fixed causalities between variables but play a guiding role in demonstrating what has been founded in a compelling way. To make sense of it, researchers using abductive reasoning (a) firstly analyze what is gathered from the field, and (b) then shape theorization based on the data. The engagement between discovery and theorization is expected to explain best what has been

[323] Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry,* 128.
[324] Ibid.
[325] Donald E. Polkinghorne, 'Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis', in *Life History and Narrative*, ed. J. Amos Hatch and Richard Wisniewski (London; Washington, D.C.: The Falmer Press, 1995), 5–24.
[326] Walton, *Abductive Reasoning*; Aliseda, *Abductive Reasoning*.
[327] Gary Shank, 'The Extraordinary Ordinary Powers of Abductive Reasoning', Theory & Psychology 8, no. 6 (1998): 841–60; Tavory and Timmermans, Abductive Analysis.
[328] Tavory and Timmermans, *Abductive Analysis*.
[329] Ibid.

found from the research subjects.[330] Thus, abductive researchers positively bring research findings in the moment of theorization, following cyclical and iterative processes between the two as shown in Figure 4.1.

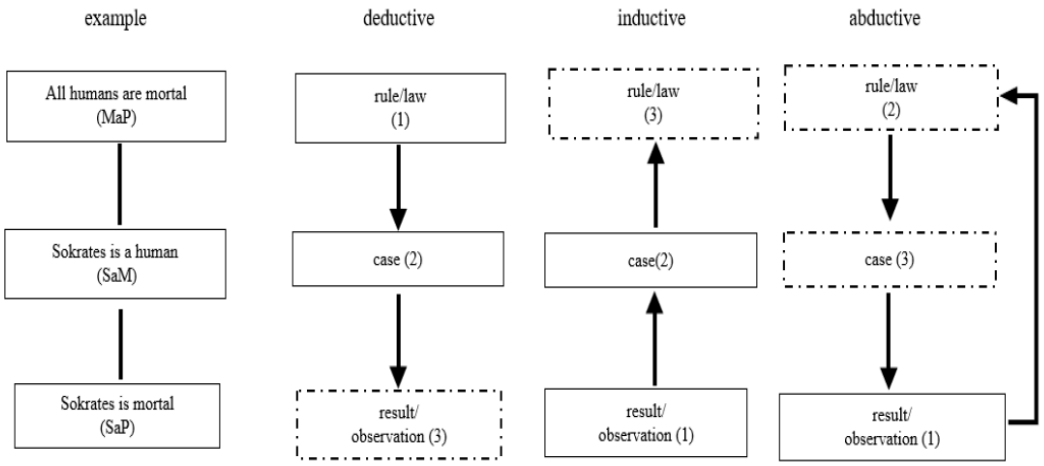

Figure 4.1. Forms of Inference[331]

In this fashion, the conceptual framework in this study offers an abductive inference to explain victims' narrative patterns of meaning-making process embedded in their autobiographical life stories. In Chapter 5, I establish a theoretical framework in an abductive way. In the first half of the chapter, I introduce foundational theories of narrative self and narrative identity to demonstrate autobiographical reasoning of meaning-making. In the second half, I pay attention to three aspects of autobiographical narrative and meaning as an analytical framework. They are autobiographical reasoning with national, familial, and religious identity. These aspects emerged from my first investigation of the narrative data that I obtained in the field research. From the initial discovery based on the foundational theories, I formulate the three findings as components of further analysis to give the best inference of the research findings. Resting on the abductive form of theorization, each finding will be presented in Chapter 6, 7, and 8 in order.

[330] Ibid.
[331] Source from Hans Rudi Fischer, 'Abductive Reasoning as a Way of Worldmaking', *Foundations of Science* 6 (2001): 361–83.

4.4 Research Design

Building on the aforementioned methodological formulation, this section outlines the research design that this study followed to gather data, illustrating practical issues in the field. To obtain adequate data to answer the research questions, a due process of data management was essential. For this, I followed four main steps: case selection, recruitment, data collection and data analysis. Here I want to address how each step was arranged and implemented in detail.

Case Selection

South Korean victims of political violence were selected as the subject of this study for three reasons. First, South Korean social context *per se* satisfied the target of this research. As part of peace research that focuses on deeply divided or post-conflict societies,[332] this study aimed to pay attention to a society emerging from political violence or struggling with the legacies of political violence. As noted in Chapter 2, South Korea is a deeply divided society characterized by a long period of political violence throughout the Japanese colonial regime, the Korean War, the military regimes, and the democratization process. In the time period, the ideological dispute between the left and the right emerged and solidified, and autocratic state authorities performed political violence towards those who were branded as communists ever since the independence from the Japanese colonial regime. For the last six decades after the Korean War, the ideological dispute has reproduced political and social conflict, segregating people's sociopolitical identities, memories and interpretations of the past, present, and future. The divided identities, memories, and interpretations play as a significant obstacle for dealing with the violent past. Under these social and political environments, past wrong deeds are not fully addressed and victims of political violence are not remembered.

Second and relatedly, this research intended to examine victims of political violence in relation to peacebuilding and transitional justice mechanisms, and researching them in the South Korean context had a potential contribution to make to the wider literature of the PACS. As addressed in Chapter 3, the issues of victims of political violence in South Korea have emerged as an interdisciplinary research topic. Since two official bodies of truth commissions, interest in the victims in light of political violence and national history has grown. However, an adequate understanding of victims' self-identification and an academic recognition of their roles in peacebuilding, transitional justice, and others related field has been scarcely researched. In

[332] For the definition, see Chapter 1.

contrast, national narratives of peace and reconciliation politicize the issue of victims and victimhood, excluding their experiences and voices. Moreover, while the societal structure still affects their everyday lives, their life stories have great importance to the vision of a reconciled society. These gaps corresponded to my attention to the research topic.

Third, the writer as a South Korean citizen has knowledge of the context and experience interviewing victims of political violence. The first benefit from it was the experience of interviewing and a personal network of contacts. I had a connection to individual victims and to scholars and practitioners in dealing with the previous working groups, I could make use of a personal network of contacts to potential informants. This network allowed me to reduce the time spent building personal networks in the field. The second was the avoidance of misunderstanding of language, history, and culture. As many researchers conducting qualitative research often struggle with not only the language barrier but also suffer from a lack of history and social behaviors, it was vital for me to be able to speak the same language as participants and recognize cultural sensitivity in telling and listening. These factors also allowed me to obtain trusted information.

Sampling and Recruitment

Qualitative knowledge derives from a qualitative investigation on research participants. As the results of research may vary dependent on respondents, whom to select as respondents is vital; thus, sampling informants. Researchers apply a standard to recruiting respondents to get expected outcomes. There are diverse types of sampling in qualitative research, including purposeful, theoretical, and snowball techniques.[333] Respondents for this study were chosen from the purposeful sampling, that aims to select informants for "information-rich cases for in-depth study". [334] By selecting research respondents purposefully, researchers reduce the unexpectedness of data and increase the probability of what is expected from the research questions.[335] That way, this study adopted the probability form of sampling, allowing myself to examine individual victims' purposeful narrative processing in relation to reconciliation by

[333] For an explanation of each type see, Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (New York; London: The Guilford Press, 2011); Stephen J. Gentles et al., 'Sampling in Qualitative Research: Insights from an Overview of the Methods Literature', *The Qualitative Report* 20, no. 11 (2015): 1772–89; Harsh Suri, 'Purposeful Sampling in Qualitative Research Synthesis', *Qualitative Research Journal* 11, no. 2 (2011): 63–75; Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015).
[334] Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods,* 401.
[335] Suri, 'Purposeful Sampling in Qualitative Research Synthesis'.

looking at their autobiographical narratives (or life story).[336]

This research chose surviving and bereaved family members of those who were killed in civilian massacres in the Korean War period as research informants. As mentioned in Chapter 2, in this period, hundreds of thousands of leftist citizens were tortured and killed for their direct or suspicious involvement with the North Korean People's Army and political engagement in communism. Most informants were children, siblings, and relatives of the deceased. The age range of the informants was from 72 to 86.

Among the surviving and bereaved family members, I employed purposeful sampling, in order to determine research informants. In particular, I used 'criterion sampling' that explicitly manifests the inclusion and exclusion of criteria.[337] I applied three criteria, including those who (a) had previous experience with interviewing, (b) perceive the value of reconciliation. Moreover, I considered (c) gender balance in the number of informants to get more balanced perspectives.

First, this research concerned only individual victims who had formerly participated in interviews. Since telling life stories centering on traumatizing events can cause re-traumatization and further distress, I strictly limited recruitment to those who had previously participated in interviews telling their personal stories. Fortunately, numerous academic and national initiatives have initiated interviews across the country, and many victims themselves have recognized the importance of giving interviews and sharing their stories. For this criterion, recruiting such victims was not too difficult.

Second, informants who share the value of reconciliation were selected. Since this study examines victims' view on reconciliation out of victimization and suffering, it was critical for me to recruit those who recognize the value and importance of reconciliation among surviving and bereaved family members. Nonetheless, it was difficult to find relevant informants as their positions and interpretations of reconciliation could not be grasped until the interviews were completed. To recruit appropriate informants regarding this criterion, I started finding informants with the help of local practitioners and researchers who had a network with victim groups, and also asked interviewed informants to recommend others who had a shared perspective on their suffering

[336] I owe a significant debt to a local research institute, *the Institute for Korean Unification, History, and Culture* in recruiting participants of this study. The Institute helped me to conduct the field research in three ways. First, the director of the Institute, the former TRC commissioner, shared his knowledge about potential participants that he and the Institute had worked with and provided relevant contact details for those who would volunteer for the interviews. The Institute's network of contacts among victims was wide for to enable this project to start collecting. Second, members of the Institute introduced me to potential informants with their credibility, so that I could have a relatively easy atmosphere interviewing them. Third, the Institute also allowed me to access different forms of materials like official documents and DVDs about civilian massacres.

[337] Suri, 'Purposeful Sampling in Qualitative Research Synthesis'.

and reconciliation. By recruiting those participants with this criterion purposefully, I was able to obtain in-depth knowledge on the research aims, openly discussing respondents' perspectives.

The last criterion for recruitment was equal numbers based on informants' gender. Because gender roles are distinctive in the Korean context, a careful investigation of male and female roles is critical to the research questions. Notably, as every participant in this study was in their 70s or 80s, considering gender roles in family and society was appropriate. Initially, I recruited twelve female and thirteen males. However, only seven females and eleven males were selected for the final investigation. Five of the twelve female participants deliberately avoided remembering what happened in the past and how they have been living since. As will be seen in the finding chapters, this attitude is closely linked to the Korean patriarchal social structure and the familial role of females.

Regarding the three criteria, I initially recruited twenty-five informants and conducted one or two interviews with each informant. Yet, eighteen participants were selected eventually,[338] and seven participants were excluded in the process of data analysis for two reasons. First, some of the seven did not provide appropriate responses to the research questions. Unlike those respondents who shared a broader vision and the necessity of reconciliation and peace in the society and positively expressed their roles and aspirations, they refused to respond to the term, reconciliation, and provided no meaning on the value in telling their life stories. In my judgement, as their responses did not accord with the aim of this study, I wanted to focus on the internal reasoning of victims of political violence to recognize themselves as subjects of peace in building a peaceful society through redemptive meaning-making more in-depth by purposefully narrowing the research participants. Exclusion does not mean that their responses are worthless, but are a subject for a further research. Second, some participants rarely told their own life stories but those of others. As this research aimed to understand how victims subjectively create meaning of reconciliation based on their own life stories, I could not use their information because of the absence of personal stories.

Data Collection

Collecting data in qualitative narrative research refers to gathering sources of personal stories embedded in different types of narrative forms.[339] As narrative research, data used in this study

[338] A full list of participant appears in Appendix.
[339] Susan E. Chase, 'Narrative Inquiry: Still a Field in the Making', ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2011), 421–34; Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science*; Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.

consisted of three materials: semi-structured in-depth interviews, personal writings including biography, poems and letters, and observational notes.[340] Interviews and writings were collected as narrative sources of story-telling and writing, and observational notes as a reference for informants' emotions and their speech style in telling their own stories. These narrative resources were transformed into narrative evidence to present victims' life experiences of political violence in the process of data analysis. Data collection was carried out from 19 February to 8 June 2019.

In-depth Interview

The primary tool for data collection was the semi-structured in-depth interview. The interview is a communicative tool for collecting the life stories of informants.[341] Not only narrative inquirers but most qualitative researchers use the interview as the primary data source.[342] Through in-depth interviews, I gathered the narrative form of personal life stories of individual victims. To do so, I divided each interview into two parts: story-telling, and question and answer.

Before the interview started, I first requested some elementary personal information, which established a link between interviewer and interviewees. Then, I listened to informants' biographical stories told in an open-ended manner. I let informants speak their personal stories with minimal interventions. Story-telling, in most cases, lasted approximately one hour, giving me detailed personal stories. The second part of the interview consisted of some guiding questions on informants' opinions of social and political environments dealing with victims of political violence and different interpretations of it. This part of the interview was conducted by a dialogical interaction between myself as the interviewer, and interviewees. The reason why I used a dialogical style of interviewing was that informants were not familiar with linking their experiences to broader themes or socio-political issues related to their experiences. I encouraged them to think about and relate their lives and behaviors to the value of reconciliation. Through this process, I could help informants to retrospectively reformulate their stories as well as make sense of the connection between their biographical story-telling and the meaning and justification of reconciliation. Indeed, some participants did not understand the connection between questions being asked and their experience, taking a while to discover how to answer.

Interviews for some participants had to be implemented over two or three sessions. When both tellers and listeners became exhausted after long and poignant life story narration, additional

[340] For different tools of narrative data collection, see Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*.
[341] Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, 'Narrative Practice and the Coherence of Personal Stories', *The Sociological Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (1998): 163–87; Connelly and Clandinin, 'Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry'.
[342] Polkinghorne, 'Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis'.

interviews were conducted. All interviews were audio recorded.

Personal writings

Personal writing was another vital narrative data source. It includes journal records, letters, and autobiographical writing, by which participants can create written forms of personal narratives.[343] I added personal writings for data collection because some interviewees found it difficult or uncomfortable to tell their life story verbally. Others shunned telling their stories over and over again because they felt re-traumatized and emotionally depressed when retelling traumatic events and their miserable life stories. In some cases, instead informants wanted to tell their stories through autobiographical writing, letters and poems. These narrative sources were of importance for this qualitative narrative research as those writings contained the writer's honest emotions and presented their suffering in an organized fashion.

Two participants out of eighteen wrote autobiographical writings, describing their family stories during and after the Korean War. These texts presented the writers' recollection of the past and a synthesis of their memories. Another two participants wrote poems. Despite not being as detailed as autobiographies, poems addressed understated yet connotative expressions of how writers understood the world. Another provided me with letters to the deceased, showing what they wanted to say to their loved ones. These writings were especially helpful for me in approaching some stories about which the informants felt too ashamed and resentful to speak. Unfortunately, not every informant provided such writings. Some of them were illiterate, whereas others had published several books of poetry.

Observation Notes

The third form of data collection was observation notes. Usually, observation notes are adopted by ethnographers who primarily use the technique of participant observation, in order to record participants' behavior or language usages outside of verbal interactions between interviewers and interviewees.[344] I used observation notes as a secondary source, considering that literary forms of narrative data are limited in capturing the moment and atmosphere of storytelling and

[343] Connelly and Clandinin, 'Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry'.
[344] John Brewer, *Ethnography*, 1 edition (Buckingham ; Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press, 2000); Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography Principles in Practice*, 2 edition (Routledge, 1995); Barbara Tedlock, 'From Participant Observation to the Observation of Participation: The Emergence Of Narrative Ethnography', *Journal of Anthropological Research,* 47, no. 1 (1991): 69–94.

the tellers' body language and facial expressions.[345] I wrote observation notes during and after each interview. These notes helped me to vividly remember the situations wherein interviewees expressed their emotions and told their stories, as well as reactions to what was asked in the process of analyzing and interpreting the transcribed narrative data from interviews and personal writings.

Data Analysis

To synthesize and convert raw materials procured in the field to an organized and generalizable form of knowledge is a crucial step in research. Researchers hope to contribute their findings to previous knowledge, and this task is only possible by analyzing data and interpreting them. There are different types of data analysis in qualitative narrative research, including content, thematic, structural, and rhetorical analyses,[346] and this study combined both structural and thematic analysis as an analytical set of data.[347]

Structural analysis refers to investigation of the structure of narrative data. It means the understanding of the emplotment of the transcribed narratives, instead of focusing on semantic expressions and meaning ingrained in individual sentences.[348] Analysts, seeing narrative resources as a completed (auto)biography, read and examine narrative texts, looking for structural characteristics.[349] The structural investigation looks at key characters and key events in autobiography and different techniques of rhetoric or narrative style. Furthermore, researchers discover coherence in narrative texts. Coherence is investigated in terms of chronological order and the narrators' tones and emotion. Also, analysts investigate how the narrators' gender affects the process of telling and writing.[350] By the structural analysis, investigators are able to focus on the progress of storylines and to make sense of the thematic lines in a broader angle of life story.[351] If structural analysis pays attention to the overall structure, style, and format of narrative texts,

[345] Tedlock, 'From Participant Observation to the Observation of Participation'.
[346] For further exploration of each analysis, see Christine Bold, *Using Narrative in Research* (London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2012); Jane Elliott, *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2005); Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer L. Pierce, and Barbara Laslett, *Telling Stories: The Use of Personal Narratives in the Social Sciences and History* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2008); Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, *Narrative Research;* Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.
[347] I used the two analytical tools because my narrative research involved a relatively high number of participants. Generally narrative research takes a group or small number of informants, describing their detailed history. However, this research covered 18 informants, so that it might have been overwhelming to analyse all stories. The analytical framework is presented in the next chapter.
[348] Barthes, 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative'.
[349] Ibid.
[350] Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, *Narrative Research*..
[351] Ibid.

thematic analysis identifies and reports patterns of themes within data.[352] Patterns of themes are, then, transformed into meaning by researchers' reflexivity and interpretation. In narrative research, thematic analysts examine what themes have been told in (auto)biographical materials and categorize them along a thematic axis.[353] Researchers grasp narrative meaning in the texts through repetitive reading, reflexivity, and interpretation. Generally, themes are categorized with patterns, and researchers determine meanings. The combination of two forms of data analysis allowed me to avoid overlooking either internal or external sensitivity of the text by focusing on how storylines are plotted or structured, what influence the emplotment has, and what meanings emerge from narrative data. The analytical framework is offered in the next chapter after overviewing theoretical implications.

Structural Components of Analysis	Emplotment	Order of stories, Key stories…
	Characters	Key characters, Protagonists…
	Rhetoric	Antithesis, Parallelism, Metaphor, Irony…
	Coherence	Chronology, Tones, Emotions
	Gender	Mother, Father, Son, Daughter
Thematic Components of Analysis	Themes	What are the root themes underlying the autobiography?
	Categorization	What are the detailed thematic categories related to the umbrella theme?
	Interpretation	What does each categorized theme mean in personal stories?

Table 4.1. Structural and Thematic Components of Analysis

To conduct this integrated narrative analysis, I followed four techniques of data analysis: transcribing and translating, reading text with reflexivity, categorization, and interpretation.[354] The reason for using this mode of analysis was to make sense of data collected along with the sensitive and contextual meaning behind what was recounted in the interviews. In particular, autobiographical narratives including recorded story-telling and personal writings required me

[352] Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, 'Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2006): 77–101.
[353] Bold, *Using Narrative in Research*.
[354] Denzin, *Interpretive Interactionism*.

to discern how speakers reminisce about the past experiences, interpret them and give meanings to the present, and also make justification for future action.

Transcribing & Translating

The first step in data analysis was transcribing every recorded interview. Transcribing means documenting informants' life stories told during in-depth interviews. The transcribing work for taped interviews was carried out entirely by myself. It was not necessary to transcribe personal writings. It is vital to notice that transcribing was conducted in the Korean language first. That was because I did not want to impair the original meaning that informants provided. The second step was translating. I translated the entire transcripts of 18 informants' interviews from Korean to English. I should acknowledge that this task was a long and tedious process. However, the most challenging aspect of translating was to preserve the original meaning of the Korean language and retain the accuracy of the text. It should be noted that translating from one language to another is not immune to the fallibility of the translator, and I checked each translated transcript twice.

Reading Narrative Texts with Reflexivity

I read through all transcripts several times. Reading allowed me to scrutinize what was being narrated, how they were depicted, and what emotions tellers revealed. Through reading the texts, I was able to probe their internal structure, trying to understand the emplotment of stories. Understanding plots was a process of rearranging stories chronically. In doing so, I also analyzed the style of story-telling, who appeared in the stories, and what language register and expressions the speaker often used.[355] This literary style of reading enabled me to grasp the overall design and emplotment of story-telling. In reading victims' narrative texts, I kept maintaining 'neutrality' to understand the transcribed texts in an objective way. Despite this attitude to the texts, I often went back to the recorded audio files and listened to them over and over again, in order not to overlook participants' tones and emotions. This alerted me to keep an unaccustomed attention to victims' suffering as narratively expressed, and thereby be careful not to distort their suffering for an academic production.[356]

[355] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*.
[356] Jennifer L. Geddes, 'Towards an Ethics of Reading Survivor Testimonies', *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41, no. 2 (2008): 1–15.

Categorization

Throughout the repetitive reading, narrative texts were also analyzed by structure and themes. For the abductive process of finding data and theorization, I first identified overall patterns of themes emerging from the texts. Three general themes were found, and I incorporated these into the theorization of autobiographical narratives in Chapter 5. However, the theorization did not offer a detailed description of each theme, but rather a general overview of them. Along with these three umbrella themes that were discovered through the initial data analysis, I scrutinized data by categorizing broader and deeper themes. There were several domains of sub-themes which could be allocated to the three broader themes. Categorized themes were then interpreted by myself.

Interpretation

Interpretation is a critical process of analyzing narrative data by detecting meanings within the data, transcribed and categorized by themes.[357] In qualitative studies, researchers analyze and summarize classified data, and associate them with broader notions to generalize complex realities.[358] In narrative research, researchers analyze and interpret narrative texts, in order to extract narrative meaning. By discovering and interpreting meaning, a research can contribute to broader literature. The validity of the interpreted meaning is critical. Because researchers as interpreters of narrative text are not immune to subjective impressions, objectivity of interpretation remains questionable. It is even more challenging in interpreting informants' subjective experience represented in biographical forms of narratives.[359]

Although it is usually accepted that interpreters and interpretation cannot be entirely objective, guaranteeing a valid interpretation is necessary. For this purpose, narrative theorists suggest utilizing appropriate data analysis to obtain a more objective interpretation.[360] As Kim argues, since analysis and interpretation of data are not differentiated, but occur simultaneously, interpretation of narrative data depends on an objective process of data analysis.[361] Indeed, interpretation in research following abductive reasoning relies on an analytical process between

[357] Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.
[358] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*.
[359] Denzin, *Interpretive Interactionism*.
[360] Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.
[361] Ibid.

findings and theorization,[362] therefore having an objective data analysis was critical to interpret the given data. For this reason, I adopted two processes of analyses: structural and thematic. As noted above, I first paid attention to the structure of the storylines in biographical materials. This includes key characters in the stories and their roles on the one hand, and rhetoric, coherence, and gender roles on the other. Through structural analysis, I was able to outline the overall structure and pattern of narrative texts. Second, thematic analysis allowed me to interpret more profound meaning in texts. In order to be more objective, I found themes, categorizing them and understanding them in social contexts. That is to say, I looked at not only personal but also social meaning, focusing on how stories connect past, present, and future, and the physical or contextual situation in which tellers told their stories. These internal and external ways of analyzing data ensured that I did not overlook the crucial sensibility of the temporal experience of telling and the situations. An analytical framework will be offered in the next chapter.

4.5 Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Trustworthiness and Validity of Narrative Evidence

In conducting qualitative research, it is salient for researchers to address how the findings that the research provides from the data are valid and can be trusted as a form of knowledge. This is referred to as validity or trustworthiness, which assures believability of a statement or knowledge claim.[363] Thus, increasing reliability and validity of the information is critical for researchers to provide trusted research results.[364]

To provide a trusted narrative knowledge, narrative inquirers need to ascertain how valid the gathered narrative data are.[365] However, it is commonly accepted that providing narrative evidence inherent in personal stories does not necessarily produce certain conclusions, but rather aims for the findings to be 'well-grounded' and 'supportable', retaining an emphasis on the linguistic reality of human experiences.[366] In other words, narrative researchers do not claim to represent the exact 'truth' of the reality, but instead, attempt to address the credible representation of what has been narrated by informants.[367] Truth in personal narratives is not 'historical truth', but 'narrative truth' which is deeply embedded in personal experience, and

[362] Tavory and Timmermans, *Abductive Analysis*.
[363] Donald E. Polkinghorne, 'Validity Issues in Narrative Research', *Qualitative Inquiry* 13, no. 4 (2007): 471–86.
[364] Webster and Mertova, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method,* 90.
[365] Polkinghorne, 'Validity Issues in Narrative Research'; Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science.*
[366] Webster and Mertova, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method*.
[367] Elliott, *Using Narrative in Social Research*.

therefore meaning remains open.[368] For this reason, the validity of narrative evidence can be increased only when trustworthiness of the overall process of access to, transcribing, and interpreting narrative data is assured.[369] In the words of Polkinghorne,

> Reliability in narrative study usually refers to the dependability of the data, and validity to the strength of the analysis of the data. Attention has been directed to the trustworthiness of field notes and transcriptions of interviews… Narrative studies do not have formal proofs of reliability, relying instead on the details of their procedures to evoke an acceptance of the trustworthiness of the data.[370]

Thus, trusted accessing, transcribing, and interpreting data enhanced the level of reliability of the narrative research's outcome. This process was described above in data collection and analysis.

Ethical Considerations

It is a truism that dealing with human beings as research informants raises significant ethical considerations.[371] That is because qualitative researchers intervene in respondents' daily lives and interviewing informants often stir their emotion and memories in the process of restoring past experiences. Every researcher studying human sources, therefore, must carefully consider this potential danger during the data collection process, especially when research investigates personal emotion, autobiography and day-to-day experiences.[372] Furthermore, a socially sensitive research subject may arouse uncomfortable feelings or even threaten informants' social status.[373]

When interviewing surviving and bereaved family members of mass killing in South Korea, two ethical issues are primarily considered: sensitive social issues and participants' re-traumatization. First, dealing with victims of political violence is a sensitive social issue, as victims and victimhood are a contested concept in some societies among different social and political groups. Some societies in which social habitus is based on long-standing victimhood as a result of

[368] Polkinghorne, 'Validity Issues in Narrative Research'.
[369] Webster and Mertova, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method*.
[370] Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science*.
[371] Svend Brinkmann and Steinar Kvale, 'Confronting the Ethics of Qualitative Research', *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* 18, no. 2 (2005): 157–81.
[372] Jan Coles et al., 'A Qualitative Exploration of Researcher Trauma and Researchers' Responses to Investigating Sexual Violence', *Violence Against Women* 20, no. 1 (2014): 95–117; elke emerald and Lorelei Carpenter, 'Vulnerability and Emotions in Research: Risks, Dilemmas, and Doubts', *Qualitative Inquiry* 21, no. 8 (2015): 741–50.
[373] John D. Brewer, 'Sensitivity as a Problem in Field Research A Study of Routine Policing in Northern Ireland', *The American Behavioral Scientist* 33, no. 5 (1990): 578–93.

past violence may define victims differently from the way researchers do. Since a piece of research is conducted according to researchers' definitions, social and ethical problems may arise when the definitions do not sufficiently reflect such an issue. However, the issues of victims of political violence which happened in the Korean War have received growing public recognition, and have been discussed by numerous South Korean scholars ever since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea (TRCK).[374] As a result of this relatively favorable social and academic atmosphere surrounding victims of political violence, interviewing victims is now considered to be a less sensitive issue.

Second, re-traumatization was an issue that I had to consider carefully. Although a vast number of those harmed by civilian massacres have been officially recognized as victims, interviewing them may have caused negative psychological impacts because telling their stories is a process of remembering, recalling informants' emotions.[375] In particular, it could be problematic when victims' emotions surrounding past events and continued exclusion persist, and researchers expose their emotions and memories to obtain information for the research and leave without taking care of them. To avoid this problem, I asked former TRCK commissioners for personal training in conducting interviews with victims. Also, before the fieldwork, I contacted The Institution for Medicine and Human Rights[376] whose main task is interviewing victims of torture and operating resilience programs for victims of political violence. I wanted to ensure that the informants of this study were able to participate in such a resilience program if they felt retraumatized. Furthermore, I explained to informants the aim and purpose of the research before the interview. In this process, informants agreed or disagreed with the whole process of data collection. Once informants agreed to it, they completed the *Consent Form for Participants,* including the voluntary acts of interviewing and the possibility of withdrawal, the right of refusal to respond to uncomfortable questions, the duration of information storage, and the dissemination of their information. The consent form also informed them that the research being conducted is a doctoral project as part of the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago and has been approved by the Human Ethics Committee of the University.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

[374] See Chapter 2.
[375] McAdams, 'Personal Narratives and the Life Story'; Dan P. McAdams, *The Redemptive Self: Stories Americans Live By* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[376] About the Institution, see the link, http://imhr.or.kr

While conducting this research, I encountered several methodological challenges and limitations. Here, I want to report such limitations. First, life story-focused narrative research has its limitation: personal life stories change over time. The main motivation for narrative inquiry rests on a belief that biographical narrative texts best illustrate the human experience, and so inquirers can access informants' ordinary lives by looking at the linguistic materials.[377] However, it is almost impossible for inquirers to obtain informants' completed form of life story in interviews. As many scholars admit, that is because the life story develops and changes through time, and therefore, treating and interpreting the narrative texts procured through interviews as static life stories admits only limited validity.[378] Instead, the story in the text is a slice of the constantly changing personal story as a whole, constituted in a specific moment of communication. To handle this challenge, I recruited informants who had previous experience of participating in interviews as I noted earlier. It was salient to recruit informants who had already prepared what to say from their previous experience of telling their stories that have been repeated several times. It prevented the informants from composing the stories accidently, and minimized the drawback of story-based narrative research.

Second and relatedly, interviewer's sociocultural position, language and relationship with the interviewee makes significant differences for the teller when constructing their life story.[379] Because an interview is a dialogic activity between teller and listener, a life story is highly influenced by dialogic environments. Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber point out that "the particular life story is one (or more) instance of the polyphonic versions of the possible constructions or presentations of people's selves and lives, which they use according to specific momentary influences."[380] To avoid this issue and obtain trusted data, I spent some time introducing myself and explaining why I became interested in studying about them before each interview. It helped informants to feel comfortable and secure with telling their stories to me. Moreover, while participants told their stories, I hardly intervened in their recounting process unless necessary. It allowed the informants to think and tell the life stories under their time management. Nonetheless, when participants took too long time for irrelevant stories, I led the dialogue by asking some questions that are relevant to the research questions.

Third, an objective interpretation of the subjective human experience is challenging. As noted, narrative inquirers hold an ontological and epistemological position whereby biographical life stories are a knowledge repository in which lived human experiences are stored. By interpreting

[377] Polkinghorne, 'Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis'; Connelly and Clandinin, 'Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry'; Atkinson, 'The Life Story Interview as a Bridge in Narrative Inquiry'.
[378] Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, *Narrative Research,* 8.
[379] Ibid.
[380] Ibid, 8.

narrative data carefully, we can access how respondents being studied understand their world and meaning-making processes. To adequately interpret such data, narrative theorists propose systematic data analysis.[381] Nonetheless, the adequacy of data interpretation is still questionable. That is, what interpretation does mean, what to interpret, to what extent to interpret, and how to ensure the objectivity of interpretation are all open to question. [382] The doubt about interpretation applies to observation notes which are subjectively written by observers. This challenge to interpreting data is what qualitative researchers often meet. Although I tried to maintain objectivity when interpreting narrative data along with categorized themes, I have to acknowledge the operation of my subjective judgment.

Fourth, the choice of respondents is subject to a representational issue. Generally, life story-based narrative research focuses on a small number of individuals.[383] By scrutinizing informants' life stories, researchers aim to provide narratively evidenced responses to research questions. However, to what extent selected informants represent the voices of a particular group or a society and how the research findings from a small number of stories can be generalizable remain questionable. Although I analyzed a comparatively high number of informants compared to other narrative studies, to what extent respondents of this study can represent the overall experience and voices of victims of political violence in the Korean War remains in question. This aspect of limitation is noted in each finding chapter, with some implications for further research.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has elaborated the methodological considerations affecting the conduct of this qualitative research by stating philosophical and theoretical foundations and designing the process of data management. This story-focused research builds upon constructivism and interpretivism and approaches to autobiographical narratives as a fertile source for discovering human experience and the meaning-making process. In this position, I, the qualitative inquirer, immersed myself in and investigated individual victims' autobiographical narratives to justify the narrative form of knowledge production. It was noted that this study involved dialectic inference to explain extensive narrative data by following abductive reasoning. By moving between findings and theorizations, this study embraces surprising results and pursues a reasonable explanation of them by incorporating findings into the theorization. The overall process of data management

[381] Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*.
[382] Robert Wuthnow, *Meaning and Moral Order: Explorations in Cultural Analysis* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1987).
[383] Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*.

was described. Structural and thematic narrative data analyses were used in the scrutiny and further interpretation of data. Reliable data management through transcribing, translating, and reading with reflexivity garners the trustworthiness and credibility of the study's research findings.

Chapter 5
Theoretical Framework

> Now we see that this sense of the good has to be woven into my understanding of my life as an unfolding story… In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become, and of where we are going… Thus making sense of my present action… requires a narrative understanding of my life, a sense of what I have become which can only be given in a story.
>
> Charles Taylor, 1989[384]

This chapter delineates a theoretical landscape for this research. In the previous chapter, I explained that the research questions are going to be examined through biographical narrative inquiry because the linguistic method enables researchers to investigate human experience and a deeper meaning to what is being studied by interpreting personal life stories.[385] Biographical narrative inquiry, however, needs a theoretical support to make sense of a narrative examination of the research subject. This chapter provides a narrative theory of the self, identity, and meaning.

Research using narrative methodology generally does not presume hypotheses that expect a correlation between variables. Instead, narrative researchers believe that narrative knowledge can be obtained from narrative representation of human experience by analyzing data inductively.[386] However, this research, as addressed, adopts abductive reasoning to theorize analyzed data by conjoining theorization and findings. Thus, the theoretical framework that this chapter develops illustrates an abductive form of theorization given from the research findings.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part introduces bedrock theories that support narrative perspectives to self, identity, and meaning. They are the narrative self, narrative identity, and autobiographical narrative meaning. These concepts establish a conceptual foundation, underpinning why investigating autobiographical narrative is appropriate for understanding the life experiences of victims of political violence and their subjective meaning-making process relating to the traumatic past, and painful present, and meaningful future. The second part offers

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[384] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge; Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989), 47-8.
[385] Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry;* Clandinin, *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*; Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science*.
[386] Clandinin, *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*; Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*.

the abductive theorization, collaborating key concepts and research findings. Based on the findings, I theorize different layers of identity-oriented autobiographical reasoning and meaning-making that navigate the way for individual victims of political violence to identify themselves and make meaning out of what they have experienced. The theorization so developed explains the factors that influence the forms of victims' autobiographical narratives of political violence in South Korea. After this theorization, I offer an analytical framework to show how data obtained is examined in this research.

5.1 Narrative Approach to Self, Identity, and Meaning

This section describes key concepts which underpin autobiographical narratives as a linguistic resource to explore an individual's life experience and meaning-making. The core concepts are the narrative self, narrative identity and autobiographical narrative meaning, all of which explain narrative perspectives on human mind, thinking, and action. These key notions offer conceptual foundations for the three theoretical components as will be discussed in the next section. By these key concepts, why a narrative approach is critical to investigate victims' self-recognition and their meaning-making process becomes clear.

Conceptual implications can be summarized as follows. Individuals are the narrative self who tells life stories based on autobiographical memories and constructs their identity according to the narrated stories. The narrative self understands their inner and outer worlds through the lens of present identity. As a meaning seeker, he or she interprets and finds adequate meaning for life events in the past and present and navigates the generative future by plotting autobiographical storylines. By composing autobiographical narratives in that way, the narrative self provides him or herself with intelligibility and subjectivity, which guide behavioral principle according to extracted and appraised meaning of life.

The Narrative Self

Investigating individual victims as meaning seekers, essentially, requires a clear identification of who victims are and how they recognize or identify themselves in their private and social lives. It is linked to an epistemological viewpoint perceiving the victimized self, regarding how they portray themselves and how they acquire their subjectivity in their ordinary lives, despite a life of

insufferable pain. Thus, a conception of the self is critical. Amongst many other approaches,[387] this study offers to understand victims through the lens of the narrative self-conception. When victims are understood as the narrative self, it is theoretically justifiable to postulate that victims are the autobiographical self who constructs their selfhood and continuity of their lives along with what they tell about their life stories. By telling stories about experiences of victimization and suffering, victims address who they are and how they have become, and organize how they maintain their day-to-day lives. In the process of recounting, victims develop and appraise meaning for their lives in the past, present and future.

The narrative self, one of the linguistic approaches to selfhood, considers narratives as the fundamental component of constituting selfhood and personal identity.[388] As noted in Chapter 1, narratives can be defined as personal story-making out of a myriad of life episodes.[389] Regarding the nature of narratives that shape one's life story-making, theorists of the narrative self contend that individuals are narratively constituted selves who understand themselves and the outer world through the lens of their personal stories.[390] Because humans are essentially storytellers, our selfhood and the structure of life are constructed through an interactive process of telling and listening to personal and social stories with others.[391] According to MacIntyre, the narrative self can be understood as one who "resides in the unity of a narrative which links birth to life to death as narrative beginning to middle to end."[392] When building a personal story out of life episodes, selves endeavor to make unity and continuity in their lives and respond to the unexpectedness and complexity. Selves seek a coherence for selfhood and a continuity of their lives by organizing life stories to deal with unaccountability; thus, selves are constructed by the unity of stories that they tell.[393] This particular approach to selfhood presents how personal story-making is the critical narrative genre that makes the individual a storied self.

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[387] It is worth noting that there have been different attempts to explain what the nature of self is and how the individual selfhood is constructed in the modern and postmodern era. Within social science, the discussion of the self or selfhood has been in line with the concern on the subjectivity and identity of the self on the one hand, and on influence of collective identity in a social structure on the other. For more discussion, see Anthony Elliott, *Concepts of the Self*, Key Concepts (Cambridge; Oxford; Malden: Polity, 2001).

[388] Marya Schechtman, *The Constitution of Selves* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

[389] Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science*.

[390] For this perspective, see Jerome Bruner, 'A Narrative Model of Self-Construction', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 818, no. 1 (1997): 145–61; Bruner, 'Life as Narrative'; Marya Schechtman, *The Constitution of Selves*, 1 edition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

[391] Bruner, *Acts of Meaning*; W. R. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987).

[392] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, Third (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

[393] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*; Ricoeur, 'Life in Quest of Narrative'.

Autobiographical Narrative and Memory

Autobiographical narrative and memory are central concepts in understanding the narrative self-conception.[394] The assumption that selfhood is constructed with the process of telling and listening to personal stories implies that individuals are represented with their autobiographical narratives. Autobiographical narrative refers to personal life story based on autobiographical memories. That is, the narrative self portrays and recognizes who they are through autobiographical recounting of life story. In building personal life story, the narrative self or the autobiographical author finds and develops the subjectivity in their lives.[395] Subjectivity emerges when the self composes storylines and states its authorship in autobiographical narratives. This form of narrative is an instrumental device for selves to find and develop meaning in life events. Selves understand their lives in plotted story lines to which they give meanings to the past, present and future throughout story-making processes.

To build personal life story, autobiographical memory assumes prominence. Theorists define autobiographical memory as a recollected self-memory which is "infused with a sense of personal involvement or ownership in the event in specific time and place".[396] Because people cannot remember all the episodes in their lives, the autobiographical author remembers and synthesizes heterogeneous incidents and experiences, and this is a selective process of remembering and forgetting that forms the structure of autobiographical narratives.[397] Building upon remembered past events, the autobiographical self interweaves the past episodes in a way to arrange them in chronological and thematic orders. This process is emplotment, and autobiographical narratives are created by an emplotment of life stories.[398]

Human Action, Intelligibility, and Subjectivity

Another aspect of the narrative self is that the self is expected to act according to his or her stories. This underlines the narrative motivation for human actions, which explains that individuals are

394 Dan P. McAdams, Ruthellen Josselson, and Amia Lieblich, eds., *Identity and Story: Creating Self in Narrative* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006).
395 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.
396 Patricia J. Bauer, *Remembering the Times of Our Lives: Memory in Infancy and Beyond* (Mahwah; New Jersey; London: Erlbaum Associates, 2007), 21.
397 Katherine Nelson, 'Narrative and Self, Myth and Memory: Emergence of the Cultural Self', in *Autobiographical Memory and the Construction of a Narrative Self: Developmental and Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Robyn Fivush and Catherine A. Haden (Mahwah; New Jersey; London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2003), 3–28; Keryn Harley and Elaine Reese, 'Origins of Autobiographical Memory', *Developmental Psychology* 35, no. 5 (1999): 1338–48; William F. Brewer, 'What Is Autobiographical Memory?', in *Autobiographical Memory*, ed. David C. Rubin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
398 Ricoeur, 'Life in Quest of Narrative'.

assumed to behave in reference to narrative construction.[399] Theorists contend that narratives associate with a cognitive process, allowing human beings to think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices based on what they tell.[400] Theoretically, narratives do not only construct individual selfhood but also provide a guideline for human actions. As Taylor states, individuals' present actions are deeply embedded in their narrative understanding of their lives, which are expressed in life story.[401] MacIntyre also explains that narratives navigate human actions because they provide intelligibility to humans. Since human lives are full of wonder and unexpectedness, storytellers make their lives something accountable to themselves as well as to others. They create intelligibility in their lives by plotting storylines. The intelligibility comes from intention by which individuals hope to lead their lives to a certain direction. In so doing, selves become the only subject of their life experience, and it is a work of interpretation of unpredictable life events. As a result, individuals follow the way they present their stories. In the words of MacIntyre,

> To identify an occurrence as an action is in the paradigmatic instances to identify it under a type of description which enables us to see that occurrence as flowing intelligibly from a human agent's intentions, motives, passions and purposes. It is therefore to understand an action as something for which someone is accountable, about which it is always appropriate to ask the agent for an intelligible account.[402]

Theorists contend that accountability and subjectivity in narrative construction explain both the self's and others' behavior. By looking at how individuals craft their life stories, we can expect what actions the narrators would take in social space. In other words, individuals' social actions can be best understood in connection with the construction of selfhood constituted by self-narratives.[403]

Narrative Identity

Building on the narrative self and autobiographical form of narratives, psychologists have further

[399] Bruner, *Acts of Meaning;* MacIntyre, *After Virtue*; Taylor, *Sources of the Self*.
[400] Theodore R. Sarbin, 'The Narrative as a Root Metaphor for Psychology', in *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, ed. Theodore R. Sarbin (Westport, 1986), 3–21; Margaret R. Somers, 'The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach', *Theory and Society* 23, no. 5 (1994): 605–49; Jefferson A. Singer, 'Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan: An Introduction', *Journal of Personality* 72, no. 3 (2004): 437–60.
[401] Taylor, *Sources of the Self*.
[402] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 209.
[403] Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*.

developed how personal story-making shapes personal identity: namely, narrative identity. Narrative identity is referred to as "one's ever-evolving internalized story-making through which the self reconstructs past events and imagines the future in order to provide him- or herself a meaningful present through autobiographical stories."[404] According to narrative psychologists, identity is a narrative production of what selves tell about their life based on autobiographical memories.[405] McAdams, amongst others, asserts that the stories we tell show who we are. Reflecting on Erik Erikson's identity questions such as who am I, how did I come to be, and where is my life going, he suggests that the internalized and ever-evolving life story-making directly responds to the identity questions.[406] When our identity is formed by stories, we can discover and reveal ourselves according to the stories we tell, which are created, told, revised, and retold throughout life.[407] Thus, theorists of narrative identity pay attention to the way that individuals craft narratives from their experiences, and that their identity are influenced by the emplotment.[408] Narrative identity, thus, describes how, while individuals develop autobiographical narratives to make sense of their life experience, they shape and develop their identity along with what they tell. Narrative identity so understood explains why narratively formed identity affects meaning-making out of life experience in a way to maintain unity and coherence of the self within autobiography. McAdams and McLean explain this by stating that

> narrative identity constructs the autobiographical past and imagines the future in such a way as to provide a person's life with some degree of unity, purpose, and meaning. Thus, a person's life story synthesizes episodic memories with envisioned goals, creating a coherent account of identity in time. Through narrative identity, people convey to themselves and to other who they are now, how they came to be, and where they think their lives may be going in the future.[409]

Regarding this research subject, it is necessary to focus on narrative identity for adults in midlife

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[404] Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean, 'Narrative Identity', *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 22, no. 3 (2013): 233–38; McAdams, Josselson, and Lieblich, *Identity and Story: Creating Self in Narrative*; Dan P. McAdams, *The Art and Science of Personality Development* (New York; London: The Guilford Press, 2015).
[405] Jefferson A. Singer, 'Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan: An Introduction', *Journal of Personality* 72, no. 3 (2004): 437–60; McAdams and McLean, 'Narrative Identity'; Kate C. McLean, Monisha Pasupathi, and Jennifer L. Pals, 'Selves Creating Stories Creating Selves: A Process Model of Self-Development', *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 11, no. 3 (2007): 262–78.
[406] Singer, 'Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan'; Theodore R. Sarbin, 'The Narrative as a Root Metaphor for Psychology', in Narrative Psychology*: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, ed. Theodore R. Sarbin (Westport, 1986), 3–21; Margaret R. Somers, 'The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach', *Theory and Society* 23, no. 5 (1994): 605–49.
[407] Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, *Narrative Research.*
[408] McLean, Pasupathi, and Pals, 'Selves Creating Stories Creating Selves'.
[409] McAdams and McLean, 'Narrative Identity', 233.

or an old age.[410] Previous literatures of narrative identity present adults' narrative development of identity in crafting stories "as a function of societal expectations regarding identity and the maturation of formal operational thinking."[411] As Habermas and Bluck discovered, crafting life stories in an integrated manner for an autobiographical account of the self only emerges after the phase of adolescence,[412] so that the self tends to start story making in a meaningful and purposeful way in response to life challenges throughout their adult life.[413] Adults tend to put their lives together into a culturally meaningful story.[414] There are three aspects that explain how adults narrate personal stories in meaningful ways: adaptation, generativity, and the redemptive self.

Adaptation is a term which refers to the narrative process of telling suffering in human lives.[415] Individuals describe negative experiences, in order to make narrative sense of sufferings emerging from such negative life experiences. Individuals do not leave negative experiences in the way they occurred, but adapt them to make a meaningful present. Individuals pursue positive resolutions to suffering so that they can be resilient by adapting their experience, emotion, and suffering to generative positive meaning such as well-being, and personal and social growth.[416] Narrative identity theorists state that to adapt, individuals think long and deep about what their experiences mean to them, how they came to be, what they may lead to, and what role negative events may play in their overall life story, and articulates and commits themselves to a positive resolution of the event.[417]

Generativity is what Erikson coined to explain the midlife adults' tendency to devote themselves to "making a positive contribution to the next generation through parenting, teaching, mentoring, leadership, and creating and caring for various products and outcomes aimed at leaving a positive legacy of the self for the future."[418] Generative adults tend to put their energy into raising children, building communities and organizations, teaching skills, passing on traditions, working for positive social change, and engaging in a wide range of endeavors to promote the development and well-being of the next generation and the quality of the world within which the next generation will live, whereas non-generative adults feel unable or discouraged to generate

[410] As mentioned in the previous chapter, the average age of the informants for this study is 78. Victims that this study investigates are those who survived and lost their family members in civilian massacres during the Korean War which occurred from 1950 to 1953.
[411] McAdams and McLean, 'Narrative Identity'.
[412] T. Habermas and S. Bluck, 'Getting a Life: The Emergence of the Life Story in Adolescence', *Psychological Bulletin* 126 (2000): 748–69.
[413] Dan P. McAdams, 'The Psychology of Life Stories', *Review of General Psychology* 5, no. 2 (2001): 100–122.
[414] Ibid.
[415] McAdams and McLean, 'Narrative Identity'.
[416] McAdams, *The Art and Science of Personality Development*.
[417] McAdams and McLean, 'Narrative Identity', 234.
[418] Dan P. McAdams, 'The Redemptive Self: Generativity and the Stories American Live By', *Research in Human Development* 3, no. 2 & 3 (2006): 81–100, 83.

positive contributions to the world.[419] McAdams argues that understanding personal stories can give a clue about why and how narrators become the agent of generativity. Because autobiographical narratives do not represent what really happened in the past, but rather express what is going on and what comes next, individuals incorporate generative meanings when they tell their life stories.

The Redemptive Self refers to a redemptive life story that transforms negative personal stories into positive ones. It is about "how a gifted protagonist encounters suffering in the world and, equipped with a sense of moral steadfastness, manages to overcome adversity to establish a long-term personal legacy toward aiding others in their community."[420] Narrative identity theorists argue that a positive story encourages narrators to understand the world and to engage them in broader societal activities and generative concerns. As the narrative self is validated by what we tell about our self and life, a good story redeems us from pain and suffering. It is argued that individuals overcome and maintain a life of well-being by framing their personal narratives with redemptive stories.

Autobiographical Narrative Meaning

The last key concept is autobiographical narrative meaning. As noted, autobiographical narratives do not only form personal identity, they also give the self opportunities to make meaning from the narratives. The narrative approach to the self draws attention to the self as a meaning seeker who leads their everyday life with discovered and appraised meaning. The self reconstructs and reinterprets past events so as to provide an evolving sense of meaning and narrative identity: who we are over time.[421] By interpreting past life episodes subjectively, individuals provide a motivation for a meaningful present and future. In this light, the self is an agent for interpretation of the world, as we have to be intelligible to ourselves and to others.[422] Therefore, McAdams argues that

> whether talking about the full life story or a personal narrative of a single event, nonetheless, people typically engage in the process of autobiographical reasoning,

[419] Ibid, 83.
[420] Jen Guo, Miriam Klevan, and Dan P. McAdams, 'Personality Traits, Ego Development, and the Redemptive Self', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 42, no. 11 (2016): 1551–63.
[421] Robyn Fivush, 'Subjective Perspective and Personal Timeline in the Development of Autobiographical Memory', in *Understanding Autobiographical Memory: Theories and Approaches*, ed. Dorthe Berntsen and David C. Rubin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 226–45.
[422] Marya Schechtman, 'The Narrative Self', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Self*, ed. Shaun Gallagher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 395–416.

> wherein they seek to derive general/semantic meanings from particular/episodic experiences in life.[423]

Importantly, scholars understand autobiographical narrative meaning as narrative processing of making sense of human experience, thereby enabling people to understand themselves and others.[424] Meaning emerges from narrative processing through autobiographical reasoning,[425] which is "the process that is hypothesized to follow the experience of contingency and serves to reinterpret the life event in the context of one's life narrative, thus, giving it a new meaning."[426] In previous literature, autobiographical narrative meaning is accepted in two different ways, according to the degree to which one assesses the function of meaning in human life. As Schechtman points out,[427] hermeneutical theorists maintain the view that meaning plays a guiding role in redeeming selves from existential crises.[428] By seeking meaning in a narrative form, selves cope with significant life challenges. For others, meaning is a mundane mechanism to produce intelligibility in volatile human lives.[429] It is an everyday practice in which individuals routinely participate in order to lead ordinary lives. Regarding these, autobiographical narrative meaning is an ordinary, habitual, and ubiquitous phenomenon that characterizes human life.[430] By developing narrative meaning, individuals set a foundation for behavior. Following these perspective, this thesis understands autobiographical narrative meaning as narrative processing in which individuals recollect past events, interpret and reinterpret them by narrating life courses, and create adaptive, generative, and redemptive meaning for the betterment of the present and future personal and social life.

Recently, scholars have pointed out that autobiographical narrative meaning can function as a coping mechanism for those who struggle with highly stressful experience and memory. These works of literature are focused on how individuals cope with negative life experiences and arrange their behaviors by giving semantic meanings while narrating their episodic life events in

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[423] McAdams, 'Personal Narratives and the Life Story', 244.
[424] Robyn Fivush, Jordan A. Booker, and Matthew E. Graci, 'Ongoing Narrative Meaning-Making Within Events and Across the Life Span', *Imagination, Cognition and Personality* 37, no. 2 (2017): 127–52.
[425] J. A Singer and S. Bluck, 'New Perspective on Autobiographical Memory: The Integration of Narrative Processing and Autobiographical Reasoning', *Review of General Psychology* 5 (2001): 91–99.
[426] Iris Hartog et al., 'Narrative Meaning Making and Integration: Toward a Better Understanding of the Way Falling Ill Influences Quality of Life', *Journal of Health Psychology*, 2017, 1–17, 7.
[427] Schechtman, 'The Narrative Self'.
[428] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, 1 edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1991); Taylor, *Sources of the Self*.
[429] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.
[430] Laura A. King, 'Meaning: Ubiquitous and Effortless', in *Meaning, Mortality, and Choice: The Social Psychology of Existential Concerns*, ed. Phillip R. Shaver and Mario Mikulincer (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2012), 129–44.

a broader construction of life story.[431] Fivush, Booker, and Graci theorized four elements to promote the development of semantic meaning in autobiographical narratives: coherence, subjective perspective, integrative meaning, and motivational themes.[432]

Coherence is the basic skill of organizing and arranging stories in a narrative. By connecting different stories, storytellers construct a coherent narrative. Coherence consists of three dimensions: chronology, context, and themes. To make a coherent life story, tellers narrate life stories in line with consistent chronology, context, and themes.

Subjective perspective is the key capacity for narrators to bring the external world into their internal consciousness, so as to integrate inner and outer experience. By subjective perspective, narrators are able to understand what happens in the temporal world. It is a window for narrators to create a sense of constituency of consciousness over time.[433]

Integrative meaning refers to synthesizing different perspectives in narrating stories. Because each story told may have different meanings for oneself, narrators need to synthesize each meaning into an integrative whole. Also, different subjective perspectives may emerge from understanding events. Thus, through autobiographical reasoning, narrators integrate conflictual consciousness and events and the self.

Motivational theme addresses individuals' overarching motivational orientations that undergird individual approach to life.[434] It is continuity of identity through consistency of goals and values across different events. By means of motivational themes, the self narrates stories that comply with them.

Given these perspectives, it is theoretically valid to assume that autobiographical narrative is a repository to display how victims establish personal stories experiences of political violence, continued victimization, and continued traumatic memories. In autobiography, victims express who they are and how they come to be in the middle of suffering. They do so by remembering what has happened in the past, articulating how traumatic events shape the present life, and contemplating what the future should be like for their well-being life. In recounting personal life stories, they develop the subjective point of view on their lives. It is a narrative processing

[431] Matthew E. Graci, Ashley L. Watt, and Robyn Fivush, 'Examining the Factor Structure of Narrative Meaning-Making for Stressful Events and Relations with Psychological Distress', *Memory* 26, no. 9 (2018): 1120–1232; Matthew E. Graci and Robyn Fivush, 'Narrative Meaning Making, Attachment, and Psychological Growth and Stress', *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 34, no. 4 (2017): 486–509; Fivush, Booker, and Graci, 'Ongoing Narrative Meaning-Making Within Events and Across the Life Span'; Hartog et al., 'Narrative Meaning Making and Integration'.
[432] Fivush, Booker, and Graci, 'Ongoing Narrative Meaning-Making Within Events and Across the Life Span'.
[433] Ibid.; Fivush, 'Subjective Perspective and Personal Timeline in the Development of Autobiographical Memory'.
[434] Fivush, Booker, and Graci, 'Ongoing Narrative Meaning-Making Within Events and Across the Life Span'.

characterized by victims' autobiographical reasoning or cognitive endeavors so as to make their past experience and present life meaningful. It is driven by meaning-making process, which is ingrained in autobiographical narratives. Coherence, subjective perspectives, integrative meaning, and motivational theme promote victims' adaptive, generative, and redemptive reasoning in the presence of traumatic memories and the life of suffering.

What is salient to notice here is that autobiographical narrative meaning is essentially influenced by narrative identity. A victim as the narrative self or the autobiographical author who pursues a meaningful life develop their autobiography from a position of who he or she is now. It is because autobiographical narratives are a reflection of how the self remembers the past episodes and organizes them in a coherent manner, thereby providing the unity of selfhood. The recounting process is developed in a way to support the present identity, and in turn, the identity determines meaning-making. In this light, victims' present identity mobilizes their narrative processing and meaning-making, regarding the events of political violence and ensuing hardship in life. This aspect is further explained in the next section.

5.2 Framing Three Identity-based Autobiographical Narrative Meaning

This section frames three identity aspects of autobiographical narrative meaning, which shape victims' narrative processing of meaning-making as analytical components. As previous literature demonstrates, autobiographical narrative is embedded in sociocultural contexts in which the storyteller is situated and cognitively internalizes the external discourse to his or her own life story.[435] Although autobiographical narrative meaning indicates individuals' engagement of personal stories and memories in pursuing a meaningful life, it does not exclude social influences from the personal processing. Instead, theorists argue that individuals reflect sociocultural factors such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, religion, and even sexual orientation in creating and developing narrative meaning. Singer writes that "narratives are inevitably created to meet the demands of social roles and historical cultural niches; they force us to ask about their audience and how their construction seeks to answer certain problems raised by the subgroups to which we belong."[436] McAdams similarly states that personal stories are told in accord with societal expectations and norms, and so "any narrative expression of the self cannot be understood outside the context of its assumed listener or audience, with respect to which the story is designed to make a point or produce a desired effect".[437] Thus, individuals do not only develop narrative

[435] Avril Thorne, 'Putting the Person into Social Identity', *Human Development* 47 (2004): 361–65.
[436] Singer, 'Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan', 444.
[437] McAdams, 'Personal Narratives and the Life Story', 245.

meaning with personal interests but reflect what the society expects of them.

Following this perspective, this thesis focuses on three identity aspects of autobiographical narrative meaning, reflecting a sociocultural pattern of personal narratives emerging from the research participants. The three identities of autobiographical narrative meaning that this chapter develops are national identity and historical interpretation, family identity and reconstruction, and religious identity and narratives as showed in Figure 5.1.[438]

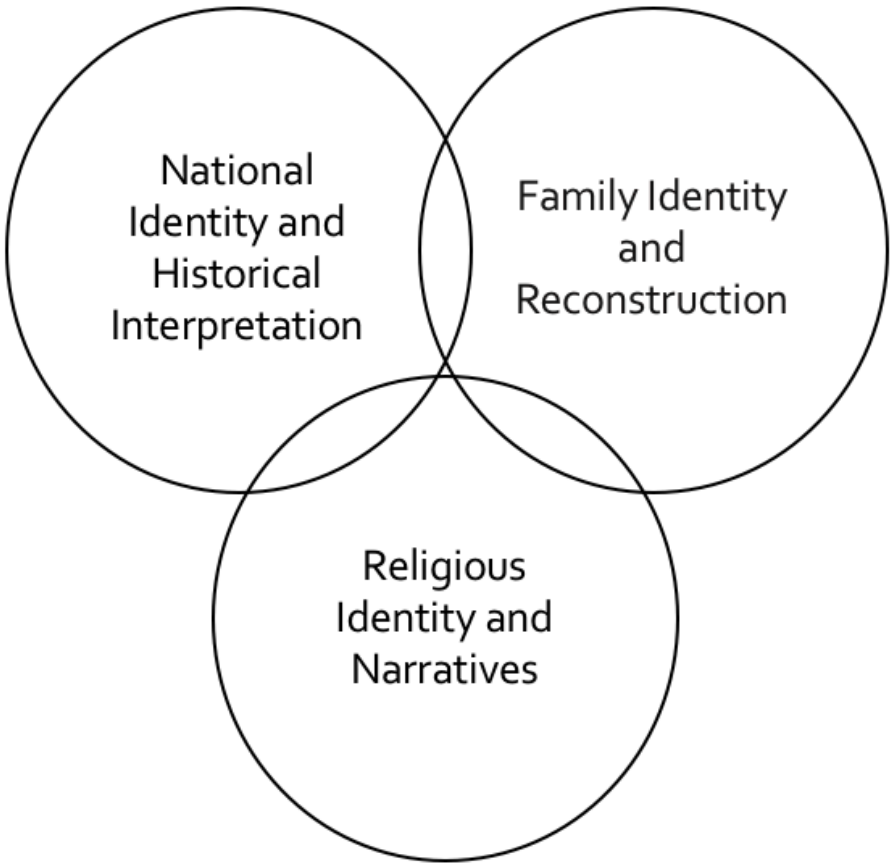

Figure 5.1. Three Aspects for Identity-based Autobiographical Narrative Meaning

The reason why this research pays attention to the particular identity-based autobiographical narrative meaning is that this study was designed by the abductive process of theorization and

[438] While three identities are addressed in relation to autobiographical narrative meaning, other identities were deliberately excluded from the focused analysis. For example, participants' economic or occupational identities emerged from a few participants. However, those identities, from my judgement, had minimal influence on victims' understanding of their suffering and reconciliation. Moreover, the three identities were sometimes nested, and yet the theorization does not consider the complexity enough. When this study draws upon identity as the critical source of narrative meaning, it was focused on what dominant identity leads the autobiographical narrative reasoning. The complexity is, to some extent, addressed in presenting research findings.

data analysis. To reiterate, researchers in an abductive model of reasoning build an analytical framework based on initial research findings, in order to offer the best inference to what has been found in the field research. To overcome limitations of deductive and inductive ways of explaining research findings, the abductive method out a mutual and continuous process of going back and forth between theorization and research findings.[439] In the abductive course, researchers establish a tentative theoretical framework in association with previous literature after initial findings and develop it after an in-depth investigation of data. By a cyclical process, researchers make sense of research findings in a reflective way.[440] Although this study's abductive approach to theorization offers three facets of autobiographical narrative meaning in South Korean victims of political violence, it should be acknowledged that the aspects do not capture all narrative sources as an interpretative tool for victims of political violence in the society. There must be other factors as foundations of autobiographical narrative meaning. Nonetheless, these mirror particular sociocultural narrative sources of personal identity and autobiographical narratives through which victims of political violence obtain a subjective interpretation of their life experience of victimization and suffering throughout their lives and extract meaning for a peaceful future.

National Identity and Historical Interpretation

The first aspect that grounds victims' personal narratives on political violence and catalyzes meaning-making process in the South Korean context is national identity and historical interpretation. This dimension signifies that the historical background to and interpretation of civilian massacres come to the fore when individual victims construct personal life stories in a way to develop their national identity. Simultaneously, victims also tell or write their life stories in consideration of the collective experience of victims in history. Stories formed by personal and collective identity in a historical course govern individual victims' storylines. What this aspect of personal narratives explains is that the autobiographical self is a historical agent who realize and describes personal and collective experiences as part of grand historical memory and narratives. That is to say, they build their personal life stories, whether they are in line with historical narratives or expressed as counternarratives, according to collective experiences and

[439] Aliseda, *Abductive Reasoning*; Shank, 'The Extraordinary Ordinary Powers of Abductive Reasoning'; Walton, *Abductive Reasoning*; Tavory and Timmermans, *Abductive Analysis*.
[440] Although this cyclical process may not be seen in the final analysis, it needs to acknowledge that this study is constructed by it. To make it clear, I collected data before theorization. In the field, I started interviews to understand what common patterns emerge from informants. At the end of data collection, I found three patterns in light of autobiographical narrative meaning. I then tentatively established a framework according to the initially found data. The following data analysis was performed through the tentative theorization, and I developed the theorization along with further analysis, in order to make sense of the research findings.

interpretation of history. In doing so, autobiographical narrative meaning emerges as a form of national value based on personal evaluations of the history.

Historical Context and Agent

The theoretical implication for this perspective is attributed to the idea that autobiographical narratives are a historical portrait, describing what has happened to one's life in historical context.[441] Personal stories are not built and narrated in a contextual vacuum but in a particular historical setting in which individual life events take place.[442] Life events are expressed according to temporal storylines when narrators compose their stories in reference to a specific time and space. In this aspect, the autobiographical self considers historical backgrounds when composing and locating his or her personal life story.[443] Historical contexts, then, display detailed information about the narrated stories: why and how the events have taken place. A life story is contextualized by a particular historical time and background.[444] Accordingly, individuals tell their stories on the basis of the historical storylines. As Andrews explains, "personal narratives thus reveal not only much about the narrating self but provide a small window into the engines of history and historical change, as we both shape and are shaped by the events of our day."[445] It emphasizes that history is embodied in personal story-making and allows individuals to situate their stories within a broader temporal historical course and to apprehend what has happened and why, and to organize what to do in the future.

This aspect of autobiographical narratives underlines that when people constitutes life storylines based on historical contexts, they recognize themselves as historical agents.[446] Because the process of recounting personal life stories raises awareness of what, how, and why an event has occurred, the authors realize who they are in the specific historical context. Moreover, MacIntyre argues that when individuals build their life stories, their way of configuring storylines build intentions of what to do in the historical contexts.[447] Following this, narrative theorists contend that personal narratives are an individual representation of a broader historical story that shapes the background of individual stories.[448] In the words of MacIntyre,

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441 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*; Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*.
442 Molly Andrews, *Shaping History: Narratives of Political Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
443 Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories.*
444 Ibid.
445 Andrews, *Shaping History,* 51.
446 Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*.
447 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.
448 Juan Velasco, *Collective Identity and Cultural Resistance in Contemporary Chicana/o Autobiography* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

> We identify a particular action only by invoking two kinds of context, implicitly if not explicitly. We place the agent's intentions, I have suggested, in causal and temporal order with reference to their role in his or her history; and we also place them with reference to their role in the history of the setting or settings to which they belong. In doing this, in determining what causal efficacy the agent's intentions had in one or more directions, and how his short-term intentions succeeded or failed to be constitutive of long-term intentions, we ourselves write a further part of these histories.[449]

At this point, a personal life story provides the author with a sense of subjectivity in history. However, in order to be the historical agent and to attain subjectivity, the author realizes who he or she is or ought to be in the historical context. The 'who am I' question is inseparable from the question of who we are in history as the 'I' exists as a member of the 'we' in historical procedure. That is to say, the self-awareness and the location of personal stories in historical context are inextricably linked to social identity and the collective awareness of history. History per se is about what to remember from the past with the present identity. The autobiographical self does not merely perceive what has been written but subjectively interprets what the recorded historical narratives mean to the individual and the group to which they belong. Thus, the narrator, an interpreter of history, relies on their collective identity.

National Identity and Collective Identity

The self's awareness of historical context is attributed to national and collective identity because the historical self is essentially a collective self in national history. Collectivity affects one's historical interpretation, and so individuals in a sociohistorical group bring the collective understanding of national history from shared experiences, memory, and identity into personal stories.[450] While the historical course is the foundational setting of personal narratives, collective awareness or a collective sense of history is critically shared among the autobiographical authors in a social group.[451] Thus, when it comes to the communal awareness of history, national identity and collective identity are critical to understanding the characteristics of personal narratives, as

[449] MacIntyre, *After Virtue,* 208.
[450] James H. Liu and János László, 'A Narrative Theory of History and Identity: Social Identity, Social Presentations, Society, and the Individual', in *Social Representations and Identity: Content, Process, and Power*, ed. Gail Moloney and Iain Walker (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
[451] Velasco, *Collective Identity and Cultural Resistance in Contemporary Chicana/o Autobiography*.

they are ingrained in personal narratives.

National identity is a personal and collective sense of belonging to one nation. Whereas collective identity includes different communal identities of social groups within a nation, national identity refers to the self's membership of the nation. One's national identity encompasses a shared belief embodied in the political system, law, institutions, language, culture and values, and a shared historical experience of ethnic groups. All these outline the national sense of belonging at the individual and collective level.[452] The nation or political elite, whether in a democracy or not, dictate and develop a national identity in the process of nation-building. In particular, national identity is formed by historical memories and narratives.

Collective identity is an identity of a social group in a nation that keeps the sense of we-ness that leads individuals to collective action.[453] It is a foundation of the social 'I', who comes to have a collective identity through shared societal beliefs and collective experience.[454] Through these, an individual realizes a communal awareness and recognition in the social, cultural, and historical world. As David and Bar-Tal state, "collective identity may influence the nature of the shared social reality that group members construct, the sense of solidarity, and unity they experience, the intensity of group members' involvement, the extent of their mobilization, the conformity expected of them, the pressure they exert on leaders to proceed in line with shared view, and the direction of actions taken by the group."[455] What is essential for collective identity is collective memory. Collective memory is a shared knowledge of the past, which governs a group of people's beliefs and shapes their collective identity and actions.[456] As a social system, collective memory shapes the form and the extent of memory of the past by outlining what to remember and what to forget. It is an explicit transmission of meaning and identities from the historical past of a group.[457] Whereas official memory is expressed as institutional narratives and public records, the collective memory of a group is transmitted via communicative interaction with the group members. Thus, collective memory promotes the group sense of belonging and forms historical memory.[458]

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[452] Francis Fukuyama, 'Why National Identity Matters', *Journal of Democracy* 29, no. 4 (2018): 5–15.
[453] Ohad David and Daniel Bar-Tal, 'A Sociopsychological Conception of Collective Identity: The Case of National Identity as an Example', *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 13, no. 4 (2009): 354–79.
[454] Bar-Tal, *Shared Beliefs in a Society*.
[455] David and Bar-Tal, 'A Sociopsychological Conception of Collective Identity', 356.
[456] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992); Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, 5th ed. (München: C.H.Beck, 2011).
[457] Dario R. Paez and James Hou-Fu Liu, 'Collective Memory of Conflicts', in *Intergroup Conflict and Their Resolution: A Social Psychological Perspective*, ed. Daniel Bar-Tal (New York; London: Psychology Press, 2011), 105–24.
[458] Ibid.

Historical Narratives *versus* Counternarratives

The historical approach to personal narratives so understood acknowledges that while the awareness of history emerges during autobiographical recounting, the self's national and collective identity may be conflictual.[459] When one's national identity does not accord with his or her collective memory and experience in historical context, autobiographical narratives describe the tension between two identities. This historical awareness and identity confrontation within the self are expressed in personal narratives. In particular, when the historical experiences and collective memory of a victimized group of people in a nation are not acknowledged, and are marginalized and excluded in official records and memory of history, national identity and collective identity collide within the members of the groups.

Amongst others, Maynes et al. have noted this point of view, by arguing that personal stories can be understood as "a form of circulation of historical narratives or counternarratives."[460] That is to say, autobiographical authors either incorporate historical narratives into their life stories or refuse them based on their historical experience and memory. As historical narratives provide a specific lens to the truth and interpretation to historical events, individuals are influenced by historical narratives.[461] As an embodied form, narrators adopt and integrate broader historical narratives with their life stories for they understand themselves as historical agents. Historical narratives guide individuals to compose personal narratives in line with the broader narratives. In this way, personal stories are told as a response to the narratives.

By contrast, individuals do not just integrate historical narratives as part of their life stories. Instead, they evaluate and reflect historical narratives which are institutionalized or standardized in the society in connection with what they have experienced. If the hegemonic historical narratives do not match with or oppose the narrator's experiences in the life courses and their memory, narrators refuse the narratives and build their narratives against it; that is, counternarratives. In this regard, Maynes et al. state that historical narratives are not always inscribed in personal narratives, but rather often contradicted by them. Although such narratives also connect the historical and the personal, a tension between the two is maintained.[462] In this respect, victims' autobiographical narrative meaning corresponds to their concerns for life experience of victimization in the historical setting and their anticipation of how history ought to

[459] Ibid.
[460] Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*.
[461] Liu and László, 'A Narrative Theory of History and Identity'.
[462] Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories,* 63.

proceed.

Family Identity and Reconstruction

The second aspect that this thesis focuses on is autobiographical narrative meaning with family identity. Family, whether in modern or postmodern societies, is the primary source and institution that give individuals a sense of belonging and the image of the self.[463] Psychologists argues that individuals from an early age develop personal identity with interaction with family.[464] Through such interaction, individuals recognize and develop who they are and what roles they are expected to play in the family. The familial sense of belonging, then, is the primary site of socialization.[465]

There are some theoretical lines of autobiographical narratives in relation to family identity as a critical source of autobiographical reasoning and meaning-making. First, scholars in previous literature in autobiographical memory have paid attention to how the family affects one's autobiographical memory, creating a skeleton of personal narratives. Fivush and Reese, amongst others, argue that parents are vital factors that allow children to start building coherent memories and narratives of their past experiences.[466] According to their research, parents' different styles of narrative significantly influence their children's narrative and memory. More recently, Fivush contends that individuals become the autobiographical self who constructs a coherent and subjective life story and narrative meaning-making under familial influences. [467] Individual develop their autobiography by adopting family narratives that are inscribed in family values, traditions, and languages, which are shared among family members. Thus, families are elementary and critical sources for individuals to learn narrative processing (or autobiographical reasoning), and in doing so, individuals consider the family a critical reference to meaning-making.[468]

McAdams also notices the central role of the family in personal storytelling. In recounting personal life stories, narrators do not just recount what has happened in their lives, but attempt

[463] Robyn Fivush and Catherine A. Haden, eds., *Autobiographical Memory and the Construction of A Narrative Self: Developmental and Cultural Perspectives*, 1 edition (New York, NY: Psychology Press, 2013); Robyn Fivush, *Family Narratives and the Development of an Autobiographical Self : Social and Cultural Perspectives on Autobiographical Memory* (New York; London: Routledge, 2019).
[464] David C. Rubin, ed., *Autobiographical Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
[465] Ross D. Parke, 'Development in the Family', *Annual Review of Psychology* 55, no. 1 (2004): 365–99.
[466] Robyn Fivush and Elaine Reese, 'Remembering and Relating: The Development of Parent-Child Talk about the Past', in *Critical Advances in Reminiscence Work*, ed. J. Webster and B. Haight (New York: Springer, 2002), 109–22.
[467] Fivush, *Family Narratives and the Development of an Autobiographical Self*.
[468] Ibid.

to develop a meaning for their close and extended family.[469] In this view, the family promotes the autobiographical self to learn and develop narrative thinking and mind from early in life, and from the process of autobiographical learning, selves tell their life stories and provide meaning for the family.

In the literature of family storytelling, researchers argue that family stories are a basic framework of personal narratives' contents or themes. Composing personal life stories based on what has happened to the family, individual stories become a part of the broader history of the family.[470] In particular, Kellas and her colleagues understand that when individuals tell their family stories, they do not just develop their family identities but also reflect on family values and culture.[471] In this way, family stories guide the narrators in how to behave and deal with life ordeals. While telling family stories, the autobiographical self deepens the level of understanding of traumatic experience for the family members through adaptability in the process of narrative development.[472] By telling and interpreting their experience within family stories, individuals arrive at navigating what to do next and develop redemptive meaning from the narrated stories.[473] Those stories help individuals to make sense of and cope with life challenges not only for themselves but also for the family. After traumatic events, bringing family concerns into autobiographical narratives is thus a natural strategy to deal with such life challenges.[474] When the family as a whole is shattered by traumatic life events and severely suffers from its legacies and heartbreaking memories, autobiographical selves compose the family's stories centering around its struggles, and attempt to generate redemptive meaning, considering how the family can be restored from such negative experiences.[475]

A vast body of research stresses that family has an underlying role for individuals' meaning-making when one member or the family as a whole suffers from adversities.[476] Bereavement as a

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[469] McAdams, *The Redemptive Self: Stories Americans Live By*; McAdams, *The Art and Science of Personality Development*.
[470] Barbara H. Fiese and Mary Spagnola, 'Narratives in and About Families: An Examination of Coding Schemes and a Guide for Family Researchers', *Journal of Family Psychology* 19, no. 1 (2005): 51–61.
[471] Jody Koenig Kellas, 'Family Ties: Communicating Identity Through Jointly Told Family Stories', *Communication Monographs* 72, no. 4 (2005): 365–89; Jody Koenig Kellas and April R. Trees, 'Finding Meaning in Difficult Family Experiences: Sense-Making and Interaction Processes During Joint Family Storytelling', *The Journal of Family Communication* 6, no. 1 (2006): 49–76; April R. Trees and Jody Koenig Kellas, 'Telling Tales: Enacting Family Relationships in Joint Storytelling About Difficult Family Experiences', *Western Journal of Communication* 73, no. 1 (2009): 91–111.
[472] Kellas, 'Family Ties: Communicating Identity Through Jointly Told Family Stories'; Trees and Kellas, 'Telling Tales: Enacting Family Relationships in Joint Storytelling About Difficult Family Experiences'; Anita L. Vangelisti, Linda P. Crumley, and Jennifer L. Baker, 'Family Portraits: Stories as Standards for Family Relationships', *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 16, no. 3 (1999): 335–68.
[473] McAdams, *The Redemptive Self*.
[474] Fivush, *Family Narratives and the Development of an Autobiographical Self*.
[475] Ibid.
[476] For this aspect, see Janice Winchester Nadeau, *Families Making Sense of Death* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc, 1997); Janice Winchester Nadeau, 'Families Making Sense of Loss', *The Australian Journal of Grief and Bereavement* 5, no. 1 (2003): 3–6; Janice Winchester Nadeau, 'Family Construction of Meaning', in *Meaning Reconstruction & the Experience of Loss*, ed. Robert A Neimeyer (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001), 95–111; Janice

result of adverse events, for example, brings torment and suffering to the whole family, and so individuals persevere with their daily lives by extracting meaning from it. Individuals interpret the present situation so that the traumatic events have meaning for the family and so that the family can learn from that process of bereavement. This aspect specifies that meaning-making is not merely an individual artefact but a familial project, in which family as a whole becomes a fundamental reference for a meaningful explanation of traumatic events.[477] In the process of building autobiographical narratives, while grieving and being tormented, individuals endeavor to make a meaningful present and future in the situation of family loss, using family-centered meaning-making.[478]

These theoretical perspectives emphasize that family-centered autobiographical narratives and meaning-making have something to do with selves' desire of family reconstruction in the presence of traumatic events: the pursuit of family reconstruction. The pursuit of family reconstruction is a natural tendency for individuals who meet family loss, grief, bereavement to make the family restored or resilient. It may mean a generative concern, attitude, and attempt to restore negative family situations coming from traumatic events, adversities, and disasters. From this point of view, family identity and the pursuit of family reconstruction are a salient narrative motivation for victims of political violence who recount personal stories. While telling a personal life story, victims realize who they are as a member of a shattered family, remember what happened to their family and arrange what they ought to do to reconstruct the family as a result of traumatic events. Family-oriented autobiographical narratives present narrative processing of how individual victims make the past, present, and future meaningful concerning their desire for family reconstruction.

Resting on the aforementioned theoretical implications, two theoretical models have been suggested in family meaning-making literature: symbolic interaction theory and family system theory. Symbolic interaction theory presents the functions of everyday conversation with family members based on the pertinence of linguistic exchanges for meaning-making.[479] However, this model can be inappropriate in this research, concerning the context of civilian massacres and the

Winchester Nadeau, 'Meaning Making in Family Bereavement: A Family Systems Approach', in *Handbook of Bereavement Research: Consequences, Coping, and Care*, ed. Margaret S Stroebe et al. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001), 329–47; Janice Winchester Nadeau, 'Meaning-Making in Bereaved Families: Assessment, Intervention, and Future Research', in *Handbook of Bereavement Research and Practice: Advances in Theory and Intervention*, ed. Margaret S Stroebe et al. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2008), 511–30; Margaret S Stroebe and Henk Schut, 'Meaning Making in the Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement', in *Handbook of Bereavement Research: Consequences, Coping, and Care*, ed. Margaret S Stroebe et al. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001), 55–73.

[477] Helen K. Black, Holly R. Santanello, and Robert L. Rubinstein, 'A Pragmatic Belief System in Family Meaning-Making After Death', *Death Studies* 38 (2014): 522–30; Nadeau, *Families Making Sense of Death*.

[478] Nadeau, *Families Making Sense of Death;* Nadeau, 'Meaning-Making in Bereaved Families'.

[479] Nadeau, 'Meaning Making in Family Bereavement'.

family.[480] Instead, family system theory can be more suitable. It refers to how an individual builds meaning with regard to the family structure as a functioning system for meaning-making.[481] As family members, individuals take their roles and rules into consideration to create meaning within the family boundaries.

Roles

Family roles refer to "the expectations attached to given positions within the family."[482] An individual is positioned in a family and expected to play their roles. Family roles guide individuals' behavior as a member of the family. By following given roles, individuals preserve their identity within the family. Roles are replaced with others when a family member dies. Other members take over the roles of the deceased, and so relocate their identity in the family structure.

Rules

Family rules are prescriptions for familial responses to a wide range of life events.[483] In playing given roles, an individual follows rules which are embedded in familial value and culture. The rules are unstated yet affect the consciousness of family members. They are a familial system that indicates what and how to behave in responses to social events. The loss of family members may change and create new rules and govern all family life.[484]

Boundaries

If roles and rules are related to family dynamics, boundaries are related to family structure. Boundaries refer to a familial delineation, separating families from each other and social environments.[485] The separation can also take the form of a generational distinction and subgroups within the broader scope of family members. According to Nadeau, family boundaries

[480] The surviving and bereaved family members had been suppressed by the anti-communism culture so that talking about civilian massacres was a taboo. In these social environments, victims avoid remembering and telling what happened to the family members during the civilian massacres but kept silence for several decades. For the contextual background, see Chapter Two.
[481] Nadeau, 'Meaning Making in Family Bereavement'.
[482] Nadeau, 'Family Construction of Meaning', 99.
[483] Ibid.
[484] Ibid.
[485] Nadeau, 'Meaning Making in Family Bereavement'.

are critical in considering "how meanings get constructed within certain boundaries and, in turn, how meanings help to maintain boundaries.[486]

Family system theory argues that family-centered autobiographical narratives and meaning-making are characterized by tellers' family roles, rules and boundaries. The autobiographical self, then, composes their personal life story in the context of family loss and bereavement, realizing their roles and rules in the family. Roles of the deceased are replaced and new rules are created. These familial dynamics promote narrative processing of the autobiographical self to make sense of the loss and bereavement. In so doing, the self generates meaning for the family concerning its boundaries, in order to make the family resilient in the face of hardships.

Religious Identity and Narratives

The third dimension of autobiographical narrative meaning is religious identity and narratives. This aspect comes from a point of view that religious identity, whether it means belief or affiliation,[487] is essentially formed by religious narratives, which govern religious individuals' autobiographical narratives in a way that motivates their meaning-making religiously. Yet, the relationship between religious narrative and autobiographical narrative meaning is relatively under-researched other than two factors within the literature of narrative identity. Nonetheless, religious narratives are arguably a critical instrument of narrative production, considering a broader literature on religious narratives and identity. In the light of narrative identity, religious individuals address their religious identity in the act of autobiographical recounting and interpret life events in time and space by adopting religious narratives.[488] By plotting storylines according to religious narratives, individuals recognize who they are and how to behave in their personal and social lives. Religious individuals may also discover religious meaning in life events through, for example, spiritual practices and experience.[489] Yet, it is also argued that religious narrative

[486] Ibid, 331.
[487] As for definition of religious identity, there are a vast number of literature. Recent discussions may be found in following literature. David M. Bell, 'Development of the Religious Self: A Theoretical Foundation for Measuring Religious Identity', in *Religion and the Individual: Belief, Practice, Identity*, ed. Abby Day (Cornwall: Ashgate, 2008), 127–42; Vassilis Saroglou, 'Believing, Bonding, Behaving, and Belonging: The Big Four Religious Dimensions and Cultural Variation', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 42, no. 8 (2011): 1320–40; Paul Hedges and Angela Coco, 'Belonging, Behaving, Believing, Becoming: Religion and Identity', in *Controversies in Contemporary Religion: Education, Law, Politics, Society, and Spirituality*, ed. Paul Hedges, vol. 3 (Westport: Praeger, 2014), 163–90.
[488] Wesley A. Kort, *Autobiography and Religious Identities* (University of Virginia Press, 2012).
[489] Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Srdjan Sremac and R. Ruard Ganzevoort, 'Trauma and Lived Religion: Embodiment and Emplotment', in *Trauma and Lived Religion: Transcending the Ordinary*, ed. R.Ruard Ganzevorrt and Srdjan Sremac (Boston: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 1–14.

provides more coherent resources for individuals to form identity, meaning, and actions in everyday life.[490]

There is some theoretical background on this in the previous research. The first line for the religious mode of autobiographical narrative meaning underpins the narrative form of religious identity. A growing number of scholars in the field of the psychology of religion or hermeneutics have asserted that religious narratives represent who religious individuals are. To review this aspect, Ricoeur notes that religious belief, community, and experience are formed with the help of religious language and the discourse, and religious individuals rely on the narratives in constituting and maintaining their religious identities through narrative interaction with others.[491] Geertz asserts that religious narrative provides a solid paradigm for human identity governing human cognition and emotion.[492] The narrative aspect of religious identity underlines that religion is a narrative manufacture, and religious identities are preserved by the narratives emerging from religious language, discourse, and story.[493] By engaging with such linguistic forms of religion, religious people maintain their belief and affiliation to religious communities.[494] In short, religious narrative determines religious identity.

Second, religious narrative is a powerful source of interpretation. Religion per se is a spiritual foundation that guides the human mind and behavior to moral and transcendental examples. Religion invites religious individuals to world-making that realizes religious modes of material and spiritual life.[495] It is a work of interpretation, which is attributed to the use of religious narrative, which offers a particular perspective on the world.[496] Thus, religious individuals who have an affiliation to religious communities adopt the narratives that make the world spiritual. What religious individuals do when they are constituted by religious narratives is that they fathom and embrace what the narratives intend to deliver to human life. That is to say, religious narratives, by nature, provide an interpretative frame to human life and existence with religious

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490 Nancy T. Ammerman, *Sacred Stories and Spiritual Tribes: Finding Religion in Everyday Life* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Nancy T. Ammerman, 'Religious Identities and Religious Institutions', in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 207–24; Enzo Pace, 'Religion as Communication: The Changing Shape of Catholicism in Europe', in *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*, ed. Nancy T. Ammerman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 38–50; Nancy T. Ammerman, 'Finding Religion in Everyday Life', *Sociology of Religion* 75, no. 2 (2014): 189–207.

491 Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative and Imagination*, ed. Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

492 Armin W. Geertz, 'Religious Narrative, Cognition, and Culture: Approaches and Definitions', in *Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture: Image and World in the Mind of Narrative*, ed. Armin W. Geertz and Jeppe Sinding Jensen (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), 9-29, 9.

493 Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*.

494 Pace, 'Religion as Communication'; Ammerman, 'Religious Identities and Religious Institutions'; Ammerman, *Sacred Stories and Spiritual Tribes*.

495 Jeppe Sinding Jensen, 'Framing Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture Theoretically', in *Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture: Image and Word in the Minds of Narrative*, ed. Armin W. Geertz and Jeppe Sinding Jensen (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), 31–50.

496 Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*.

meaning, and individuals approve the narratives that organize their identity and support a view on life in making sense of their worldly experiences. In doing so, religious individuals relate themselves to metaphysical or transcendental being and experience and associate their life experiences with a religious meaning of life.[497] Building on this point of view, scholars contend that when religious individuals recount their life experience, they rely on religious narratives to identify who they are and to make sense of what is happening in the real world, thereby seeking a deeper meaning of life.[498] Accordingly, it is theoretically arguable that through the lens of religious narratives, individuals solidify their religious identity on the one hand, and equip a frame to understand the real world with religious meanings and interpretations, in order to make a meaningful present on the other.[499]

Third, scholars pay attention to how religious individuals overcome their hardships with the help of religious interpretation and meaning. According to some theorists, religious individuals who suffer from adversities or are in mourning for bereavement tend to cope with their trauma and grief through religious meaning.[500] In particular, scholars in pastoral theology agree that religious individuals deal with inexplicable and insufferable feelings from hardships by finding coherent religious meaning.[501] Individuals who are in a difficult phase of life create religious meaning for themselves by developing the capacity of interpreting why the events happened and what the experiences would contribute to their lives after all. By relying on the narratives that are often moralizing, instructive, normative, and prescriptive to existential quests in life, individuals attempt to make sense of the world imposing suffering on them and overcome it through the spiritual meaning of life.[502] Thus, religious narrative is a bastion for dealing with hardships in human life. There are some sources of religious narratives as listed below.

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[497] Armin W. Geertz, 'Definition as Analytical Strategy in the Study of Religion', *Historical Reflections,* 25, no. 3 (1999): 445–75, 471; Jeppe Sinding Jensen, 'Framing Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture Theoretically'; R. Ruard Ganzevoort, 'Religious Coping Reconsidered: A Narrative Reformulation', *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 26, no. 3 (1998): 276–86.

[498] Kenneth I. Pargament, *The Psychology of Religion and Coping* (New York: Guilford Press, 1997); Jensen, 'Framing Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture Theoretically'.

[499] Geertz, 'Religious Narrative, Cognition, and Culture: Approaches and Definitions'; Jensen, 'Framing Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture Theoretically'.

[500] Pargament, *The Psychology of Religion and Coping;* McGuire, *Lived Religion*; Ganzevoort et al., 'Trauma and Lived Religion'; Michelle Walsh, *Violent Trauma, Culture, and Power: An Interdisciplinary Exploration in Lived Religion* (Boston: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[501] Pargament; Ganzevoort, 'Religious Coping Reconsidered'; Crystal L. Park and Donald Edmondson, 'Religion as a Source of Meaning', in *Meaning, Mortality, and Choice: The Social Psychology Existential Concerns*, ed. Phillip R. Shaver and Mario Mikulincer (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2012), 145–62.

[502] Jeppe Sinding Jensen, *What Is Religion?* (Durham; Bristol: Routledge, 2014), 300.

Religious Stories

One of the critical narrative sources in religious tradition is religious stories. Religious stories are about religious events, the Saints, and God(s) or Transcendence written in religious texts. Just like the narrative self, religious people are story tellers. Religious individuals tell their stories in conjunction with religious stories that govern personal stories.[503] Ganzevoort states that because religious stories are full of hope, trust, and openness to the Transcendence,[504] individuals rely on religious meaning from the stories by a process of telling and retelling. Geertz states that religious individuals imitate what religious stories tell us,[505] and therefore, individuals adopt or juxtapose sacred stories and personal stories, in order to understand events religiously. When one adopts religious stories in constructing personal narratives, authors develop their stories as a religious testimony.

Religious Aphorism

Another form of religious narratives is religious aphorisms. While religious stories govern personal stories, religious aphorisms may provide a direct interpretative frame to the stories. Not every individual develops their stories through the lens of religious stories. Instead, some individual make use of religious axioms or phrases to equip themselves with religious perspectives on life. Whether aphorisms come from scriptures or authoritative persons' interpretation, they are conceived as paradigmatic examples of interpretation.

Religious Rhetoric

Religious rhetoric is also a critical source of religious narratives. Rhetoric mean linguistic techniques that tellers and writers use to effectively convey intended meaning to listeners or readers. When we conceive of a religious person with regard to religious narratives, he or she can be thought regarding their linguistic expressions. As Paul Ricoeur stated, religious belief develops and comes with linguistic expressions that are religiously meaningful for the self and the faith community.[506] According to him, when religious belief is associated with religious narratives, religious story, languages and rhetoric are the emanation of the religious belief. In this light,

[503] Geertz, 'Religious Narrative, Cognition, and Culture'.
[504] Ganzevoort, 'Religious Coping Reconsidered', 5-6.
[505] Geertz, 'Religious Narrative, Cognition, and Culture'.
[506] Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*.

religious rhetoric is a religious expression for religious people when they build the religious form of autobiographical narratives. Rhetoric can be understood with different linguistic styles such as metaphor, simile, parallelism and comparison.

Given these theoretical boundaries, it is reasonable to assume that victims of political violence who identify themselves as religious persons express their religious identity in recounting their personal life stories. While addressing who they are in this way, victims plot autobiographical storylines and account for the events of civilian massacres and succeeding experiences for themselves and others in accordance with religious narratives. In doing so, victims remember what has happened to their lives and understand why those events happened, and arrange what to do as a religious person in telling life stories. This autobiographical narrative processing helps them cope with their grief and bereavement arising from traumatic events and memory as they extract religious meaning from their lives in suffering.

5.3 Analytical Framework

Based on the theoretical framework, this study investigates obtained narrative data in an integrative way, using both structural and thematic analysis. The combination of two different forms of analysis helps to understand the narrative meaning emerging from data more effectively. As noted in the previous chapter, structural analysis examines critical components that construct and characterize narrative data and thematic analysis investigates representative themes responding to the research questions on the basis of the structural hallmarks. By its form, structural analysis adopts participants' narratives as a complete form of linguistic source and thematic analysis regards the narratives as source of meaning. By combining both analyses, I could inspect how structural features of each data can contribute to understanding narrative themes, that explain research questions in-depth.

Having said that, clarification is needed of which analytical process is applied to respond to the research questions. Figure 5.2 presents five analytical steps: identification of respondents' narrative identity, ways of telling and writing, worldview, self-awareness, and meaning of reconciliation. These steps are tailored to investigate participants' autobiographical narratives, which offer the linguistic form of knowledge to the research questions. The theoretical framework developed in this chapter helps to interpret data in each of the five steps of analysis.

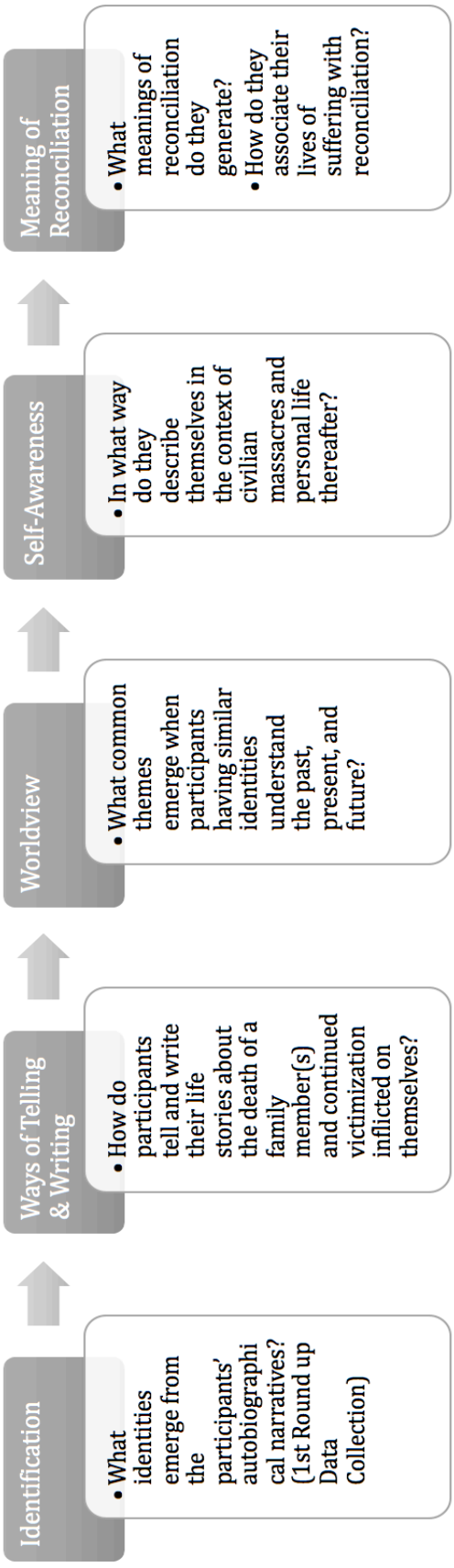

Figure 5.2. Five Steps of Integrative Data Analysis

The first step clarifies participants' dominant identities that motivate the construction of autobiographical narratives. It is assumed that victims as the narrative self develops their identities in the process of recounting, and they compose their life stories centering around who they are. Finding narrative identity is done during the first round-up data collection, through which the following four steps are elaborated during data analysis. As this chapter presented, the three identities are national, familial, and religious identities.

The second step investigates structural components of participants' narrative data, focusing on textual characteristics. As noted, structural analysis identifies emplotment, characters of stories, rhetoric, coherence, and so on. It overall finds out participant's ways of telling and writing about their stories, describing the death of family members and continued victimization. This step makes it clear how participants with national, familial, and religious identity compose their stories by utilizing linguistic features, which emphasize the central theme of their stories.

The next step begins the thematic analysis. The thematic analysis finds out common themes and categorizes and interprets them. It is comprised of three steps: participants' worldview, self-recognition, and meaning of reconciliation. First, participants' worldview is analyzed. Because personal narratives are an embodiment of what the tellers and writers think about the world around them in the past, present, and future, it is critical to notice participants' perspectives on their lives concerning the past events of civilian massacres. It drives thematic coherence in participants' stories, allowing them to organize their present life and to envision the future.

The fourth step explores participants' self-awareness. While worldview presents participants' understanding of the outer world, self-recognition displays how they portray themselves in the middle of suffering. It goes over their simple description, and pays attention to the way of interpreting who they are and what they ought to do in the aftermath of civilian massacres as the origin of their suffering. Thus, self-awareness presents informants' subject point of view on themselves and their lives in the middle of suffering.

The last step of analysis detects meanings of reconciliation. This study aims to look at victims' subjective point of view on reconciliation through autobiographical reasoning as an internal mechanism. Finding meanings of reconciliation, thus, references both structural and thematic analytical outcomes investigated in the previous steps. It is salient to notice that meanings, from the narrative point of view, are closely linked to participants' textual structure and derive from the deeper understanding of the world and the narrating self.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has presented core concepts and theorized three identity-based autobiographical narratives as analytical objects. In the first section, I introduced the notions of the narrative self, narrative identity, and autobiographical narrative meaning to explain the narrative approach to victims of political violence. These notions lay a conceptual foundation, explaining how individuals and their identity can narratively be constructed and why personal story making is the fundamental source of understanding personal meaning-making. Furthermore, this conceptualization states that individuals extract meaning via narrative processing by telling and retelling stories and interpreting them.

Resting on the conceptual framework, I built an integrative framework of autobiographical narrative meaning in the second section. As noted earlier, as an abductive approach, this framework was based on what has been found in this researcher's finding to provide the best inference of the data. The framework was focused on how national, familial, and religious identities influence victims' autobiographical meaning-making. These identities provide critical references for how individuals victims tell about their life, address their identity, and extract meaning out of and deepen their life experiences of victimization. Based on this framework, Chapters 6, 7, and 8 report each finding respectively.

Findings

Chapter 6
Historical Awareness and Aligning with Nationalism

> I am really concerned about this country. This is a messy situation… Where are we going? I always think about the direction of this country. I don't care how foreigners see this country, but on a deeper level, we have too many problems… I like the idiom, 'after self-moral training and home management comes governing a country and the entire world.' What I mean by this is, I really want this country to be a just country. We talk about reconciliation, but it is unlikely unless the state meets our aspirations. The state has to do what they have to do. No doubt. The government acknowledges past wrongdoings, recovers our reputation, and pays reparations. For our part, we have to realize that what happened in the war was a disaster in a dark time. What we victims have to do is not to walk the same route. Even if a war broke out again, we mustn't revenge our enemies. We have to see this problem by asking why, how, and by whom the killing happened from a holistic historical angle, to understand the present and to make a plan for the future. We should not live with impatience and endless anger. We are all Koreans. I share this with other victims… So, we all agree that if the government meets our aspirations, we are happy to start a new future for this country. We shouldn't think differently.
>
> - Participant, Lee Se-Chan

This chapter presents the first set of research findings. In the previous chapter, I have clarified that three distinctive identities emerging from respondents' narratives as the core indicator of subjective interpretation and meaning-making.[507] Concerning the three, this chapter addresses an in-depth analysis of those participants who compose their autobiographical narratives through the lens of national identity. Some respondents epitomized this style of autobiography.[508] By presenting those respondents' narrative data, I will be able to provide a focused explanation of

[507] In Chapter 4, I have emphasized that this study was conducted with an abductive sense of reasoning characterized by a mutual interaction between theory and findings. In abductive reasoning, researchers offer a theoretical framework based on the first round-up data analysis to give readers the best inference of the data. If then, findings are to some extent previously expected in theorization. By going back and forth between findings and theorization in the writing process, researchers can amend theorization afterward. Following this model of inference, I offered some theoretical implications in Chapter 5 after the first data round-up abductively, explaining each aspect of narrative identity (national, family, and religious identity) in relation to meaning-making in the previous research. Each finding chapter is presented through the lens of the abductively offered theorical lines.

[508] For participants' biographical information, see Appendix.

how victims' national identity affects and promotes their autobiographical narrative reasoning, which allows them to develop subjective meaning of reconciliation. Indeed, those respondents' autobiographies were marked by their national mindset, historical concern, and pride in Korean ethnicity. Although this chapter focuses on these informants' autobiography, it does not exclude other participants' level of national identity in their narratives, however. Instead, it simply displays the respondents' narrative processing based on national identity, while acknowledging that others are more prone to compose their autobiography through family and religious identity.

Generally, findings of qualitative studies are reported with narrative evidence,[509] and this study's analyses demonstrate a more complex investigation of the narrative data because the methods aims to respond to the research questions by understanding participants' emplotment of life stories, regarding narrative per se as the ontological stance of human experience.[510] To report findings adequately, this chapter, as proposed in the analytical framework,[511] displays each result from the structural and thematic analysis. The structural form of analysis presents orders of storylines, rhetoric, and coherence that determine the overall characteristics of participants' autobiographical narratives. The thematic analysis displays categorized themes that construct units of meaning. Themes are enumerated under a core and sub-themes. These sets of analysis lead to victims' subjective meanings of reconciliation. After the analyses, I synthesize and reflect on what has been reported in this chapter.

Following the analytical framework as suggested in the previous chapter, the victims' autobiographical narratives are structurally historical testimony in reference to civilian massacres. The ways of telling and writing life stories are characterized by a historical form that places individual experiences in a broader historical context. In doing so, they hope to develop their autobiographies as counternarratives to the conventional historical memory and to narratives that exclude their experience. These participants showed that they are embedded in a historical mindset, which encourages them to adopt a broader historical perspective on the violent events and their suffering. Building upon these two structural features, participants developed their stories with hopes for the expansion of historical memory and narratives. As both historical subjects and moral agents who hold a high level of national identity and at the same time a sense of collective victimhood, participants develop their storylines so as to appeal to a transformation of partial historical memory and narratives. Some sentiments of reconciliation emerged in this line. Victims suggested that reconciliation ought to be victim-centered and an

[509] Linda Dale Bloomberg and Marie Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Road Map From Beginning to End*, Fourth edition (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2019).
[510] For this study's ontology, see Chapter 4.
[511] For the analytical framework, see Chapter 5.

instrument for building a peaceful society through shared memory and narratives of the past. These perspectives shed light on the idea that reconciliation may play a key role in building peace in the Korean Peninsula.

6.1 Understanding National Identity in Autobiographical Narratives

Before presenting the analyses, it is useful to reiterate some theoretical perspectives, explaining the role of national identity and history in victims' autobiographical narratives. As shown in Chapter 5, victims as the autobiographical author are the historical agent who composes their personal narratives within historical contexts. Their descriptions of private episodes and events are remembered and narrated in the outline of the historical setting, and therefore, personal narratives are atomized stories of the grand historical discourse. In doing so, victims develop their historical interpretation of what has happened in the past and what it means to the present and the future. Through the narrative process, victims may become subjective interpreters of history.

In interweaving historical context into personal narratives, victims' national and collective identity come to the fore to compose autobiography because historical interpretation cannot be remote from one's national and collective memory and experience. If history depends on historical memory of particular groups in temporal time, the present group identity forms historical interpretation. In this light, victims' national and collective identity in society plays a part in promoting the interpretation, affecting personal narratives and meaning-making.

Theorists also note that personal narratives in this light can be an arena that reflects historical narratives and counternarratives. When a person's national and collective identity and experiences in history collide each other, the autobiographical author does not simply adopt the official narratives and memory of history, but instead, makes their stories as counternarratives of it. From this point of view, victims' narratives can be an atomized historical reference on the one hand and counternarratives on the other because their national and collective identity may be in conflict, with regard to their historical experience of state-led civilian massacres.

6.2 Investigating Narrative Structure

Resting on the theoretical implication, the first part of the analysis presents the structural investigation. As mentioned in Chapter 4, this research analyzes first the structural features of transcribed narrative data; thus, victims' autobiographies. It is an examination of a literary style

of the data, scrutinizing the organization of stories, characters, rhetoric and key events, which are essential elements of life stories.[512] Because a literary work is composed with a central theme and surrounding elements, the main subject of the literature can be rightly understood when such elements are taken into consideration. Thus, structural analysis in this thesis is used to address the literary forms and key features of the participants' autobiographies, making sense of emerging themes from the texts which will be presented in the next section. In this sense, the analysis denotes that meaning can be understood not only as semantic units but also as structural products.[513]

Two structural features were noticeable from the narrative data of those respondents who composed their autobiographies especially through the lens of national identity, while most participants shared some levels of it. First, the overall emplotment of their autobiographies is marked as a form of historical witness. Second, they exposed a narrative tension between official historical narratives and their stories, which acted as a counternarrative.

Telling Autobiographical Stories as Historical Witness

Those participants who composed autobiographical narratives along with their national identity shared a similar narrative form. That is, they told or wrote their autobiographies as if they were witnessing historical events: namely, historical testimony or witness. These respondents, amongst others, presented a high level of historical awareness, and the contents of their stories were replete with historical explanations of what happened to them and their families during and after the civilian massacres. Their stories were told in the form of historical procedures, and the authors tended to provide historical interpretations while recounting.

Participants tended to begin their storytelling by telling either personal or family stories, which provided some factual information about what happened to them in the war. They soon extended this with explanations of the historical situations around the event, which focused on the detailed process of the violence. They then reverted to their personal stories about the aftermath of the killing, in particular, how they and their families have suffered. This pattern was repeated several times, and they shared a historical perspective on how to understand civilian massacres and their victimization in the broader Korean historical context. This interpretation covered the wartime and traced back to older national history, in order to make sense of the contextual circumstances of the origin of the violence. In this process, victims addressed their national identity as Koreans.

[512] Barthes, 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative'.
[513] Ibid.

Although the violence was unjust and they struggled with it, they affirmed that they are Koreans. Their historical interpretation and national identity seem to have a mutual relationship. At the end of this narrative development, the respondents expressed their opinions on reconciliation. This narrative structure as historical witness showed that these victims generate meanings of reconciliation, with regard to their historical awareness and national identity, which places a critical pressure on the society in which a protracted conflict persists as a result of historical injustice (see Figure 6.1.).

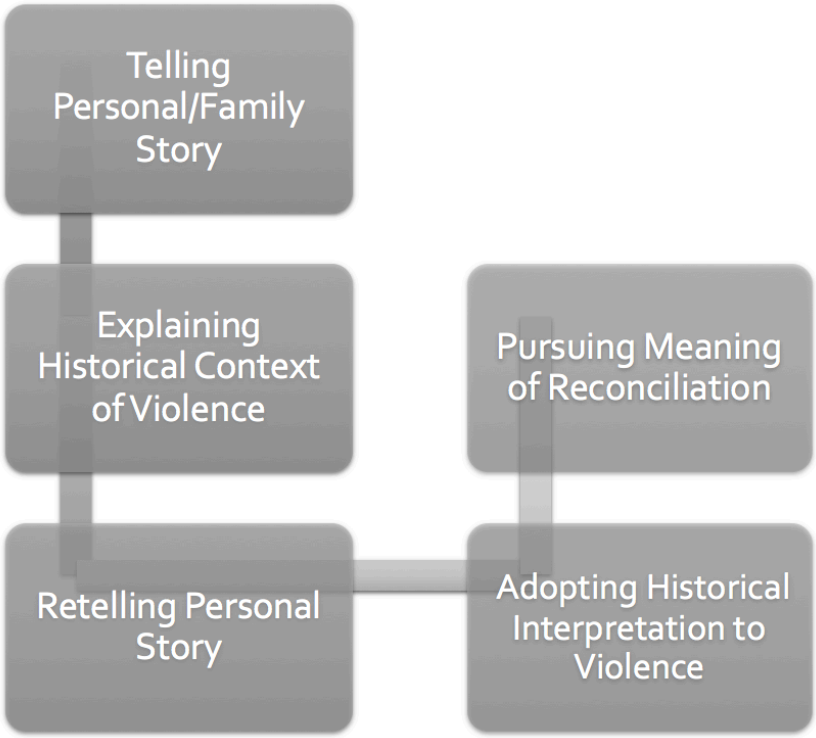

Figure 6.1. Narrative Structure and Emergence of Meaning 1[514]

One participant, Choi Young-Sup demonstrated this example of narrative structure. Choi, a board member of a local Bereaved Family Association, has actively participated in victims' movements and official educational programs in public schools, after learning that his father had been killed during the massacres. His narratives were marked by both historical interpretation and a moral perspective on human beings and society.

[514] This thesis has three Figures of structural analysis in each finding chapter, presenting how victims' narrative structures are constructed with regard to their identity. The same Figures; that is, Narrative Structure and Emergence of Meaning 2 and 3, will be suggested in Chapter 7 and 8 respectively.

#1

In the war, my father was arrested and killed, and my uncle ran away. I am not sure if he went to North Korea or not. Well, my father did not do anything in particular. I heard he was a farmer and was, a bit erm…, smart so that he taught people at night. I dimly remember people coming to my home and studying with my father. (…) Well, my uncle was a leftist for sure. He was tortured during the Japanese regime. But my father was not, as far as I know. He was just an educated man.

#2

We should recognize that after independence in 1945, the conflict between the rightists and the leftists was substantial. If you inspect the declassified US documents that investigated the thoughts of Koreans in the southern part at that time, 70% were socialists and 7% communists. So, most people were socialists. We should know that those Korean people who followed socialism were the elite, not proletariats. This is a very distinctive feature of Korean leftism and socialism. (…) Civilian massacres that we talk about now took place not only during the Korean War. In fact, they started in 1946. People from both sides killed each other, and this was extended into the War. You know what happened in Daegu, Yeosu, and then… uh… Jeju. We must view this problem from a wider historical angle.

#3

We Koreans must recover our pride in being Korean. We can restore our self-esteem and dignity. We are talking about civilian massacres, but they began from foreign powers, strictly speaking. Our consciousness of the past and our perspectives on peace are strongly subjugated to the foreign powers, but we must recover our autonomous way of achieving peace. And… that… is what we victims can do. Autonomous peace. Yes. That is the right thing. That's why when we look back on our lives, we should have a fair perspective on the past. We shouldn't be biased. Although my parents were killed, we should not hate offenders forever nor follow the anti-communism ideology. This is a balanced, holistic and long-term perspective on history.

#4

The basic condition for reconciliation is to ensure non-killing. At least, the government ought not to kill its citizens. Reconciliation comes when the state

> protects citizens and citizens require the state to protect them. That is reconciliation and peace. (…) Peace for the survivors and bereaved family members. We have thought much about the killing of their families, their life experiences thereafter, and the indescribable hatred. This indescribable hatred must be ended. It persists. It persists under the justification of killing. The continuation! In Vietnam, the Korean army massacred countless Vietnamese civilians. This eventually comes from no love, no mercy, no compassion toward other human beings. What we can do is to become a foundation for the non-repetition of wars and um… respect for living beings.

Choi's narratives epitomized the example of victims' autobiographies coupled with historical awareness and their national identity. He began his story by stating what had happened to his father during the war. Although he did not remember much about the event, the fact that his family are direct victims of the killing led him to compose and develop his autobiography from the angle of the victimization. At the same time, he consciously explained the sociopolitical situation: that most Koreans were socialists throughout and after the Japanese colonial regime. By introducing the contextual background, he spoke about why historical understanding is critical to understand the meaning of his father's death in the right way. According to him, this provided him with a frame in which to place the past. His awareness of national history allowed him to see the bereavement and suffering from a broader angle of grand Korean history. He linked his suffering to the condition of the country being suppressed by colonial powers, including Japan and the U.S. He understands that his life is the result of unjust political authority, but that the root causes of political violence are world powers which ruled the Korean Peninsula in an unjust way.

In this manner, victims' autobiographies can be seen as historical witness. As for historical witness, victims build their stories not only for testifying their life experience as a result of historical injustice but also for providing some historical meaning to it. To do so, the victims tended to rely on their historical interpretations to make sense of their view of suffering as it offers a contextual framework. Reliance on historical interpretation for making their stories as historical witness is a noticeable feature for these participants, and in doing so, they became subjective commentators on their lives of suffering and history. Indeed, these victims seemed to gain subjectivity in the recounting process, when they offered their subjective interpretation of national history. Moreover, this subjective perspective on national history motivated them to pursue meanings of reconciliation and related values.

Official Historical Narratives versus Counternarratives

Another narrative feature of the participants is that they developed their stories as counternarratives to the official historical memory and narratives. Because victims believe that their experience of victimization is not fully acknowledged or recognized as part of official history, they tell their stories and demand to be included in historical experiences in official memory. Through the historical form of witness, victims reflected on what the national history tells about their victimization, and raised their voices to testify how they have been victimized. In doing so, victims not only narrate their stories in their historical background, but deliberately object to the popular memory and narratives of history, and portray their life experiences as counternarratives.[515] This claims an inclusive historical memory, which incorporates victims' untold and forgotten historical experiences in popular forms of memory.

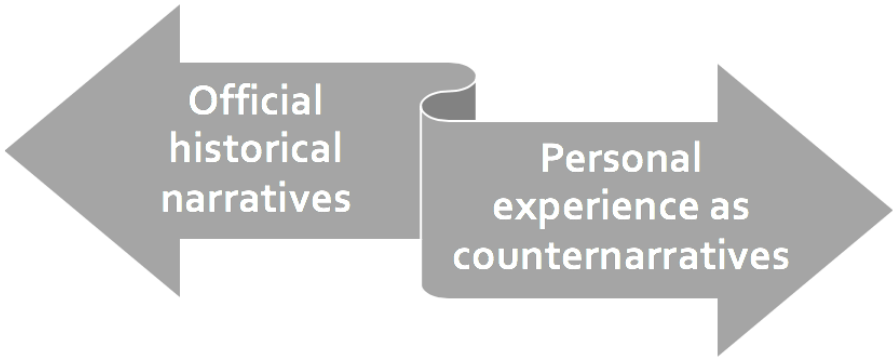

Figure 6.2. Victims' Personal Narratives as Counternarratives

These participants often juxtaposed official historical memory and narratives and what they remembered and experienced. They did not seem to do this intentionally. Instead, they told and wrote personal stories in comparison to the official historical memory and narratives. When comparing the two, participants often used opposing conjunctions such as 'however', so as to emphasize their particular historical experience. In doing so, they consciously and unconsciously developed their autobiographies as a story of resistance. Some explicitly addressed the fact that their lives were full of resistant acts because the official history does not remember them. Regarding social stigmatization, victims have lived as communists, and had to survive discriminatory and exclusive social environments. This kind of life experience imposed endless suffering on them, and they understood their lives as survival. These remembered events became

[515] Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*.

sources of resistant narratives against the exclusive historical records. These resistant themes spread throughout their stories, making them counternarratives.

For instance, Lee Kai-Sung's autobiography is marked by his description of survival and resistant form of life as a result of his father's death. He often portrayed that he was a communist but survived and avoided stigmatization. This life experience shaped his life as resistance. As he stated,

> In my mind, I was always thinking of myself as the son of commie, and so I thought I needed a strong background behind me to support. (…) I was a shepherd and wanted to be perfect in every possible way. It was a resistance avoiding the commie tag, but I felt sorry for my family.

This form of narrative addresses an identity dilemma in these participants. That is, as victims of political violence, they composed their autobiographies with the realization of what the official history remembers about them and their untold lives. They developed their stories as counternarratives, to the extent to which they could maintain their national identity. Therefore, the purpose of building counternarratives had something to do with their concern for the nation. This reflects their ambivalent position as members of society as well as those who were abandoned by the society. This mixed identity appears in their personal narratives in the way they adopted a broader historical interpretation, on the one hand, and developed their stories as counternarratives on the other.

Summary of the Analysis

In this section, I have analyzed two structural features. Those victims who were anchored in their national identity to construct their personal narratives tended to show their historical awareness and incorporated them into their stories. They deliberately tried to interweave their stories with existing historical records, memory, and narratives. In doing so, they made their stories take the form of historical witness. Focusing on historical procedures, personal stories and experience became a critical reflection of those historical events. These victims showed a high level of historical interpretation, through which they could make sense of civilian massacres and further victimization in their lives. However, their stories told in the historical setting are developed as counternarratives that appeal to a more inclusive historical memory, and narratives that do not acknowledge the historical wrongs done to them and the ensuing outcomes on their lives. What it means is that their narrative structure shows a dilemma: they want to associate their stories

with the history of the nation, while at the same time they are unable to do so because of the exclusive narratives and memories about victims of the historical event of civilian massacres. Therefore, they could not help but compose a particular form of personal narratives as a critical reflection of national history.

Crucially, these structures demonstrate the major differences between those victims' autobiography and that of others. Whereas other participants tended to develop their autobiographies as part of family story or religious testimony as will be seen, these respondents associated their stories more with historical contexts and developed a historical interpretation, outlining a particular view on victimization and suffering. In doing so, these participants, amongst others, recognized themselves as subjective interpreters of national history and accepted their roles in it. Moreover, these structures affected victims' meaning-making to reconciliation. Encouraging them to contemplate their national identity and how they came to be in the middle of violent historical events, these structural features guided victims to envision reconciliation in relation to their aspiration of historical correction and broader concerns about the nation. That is to say, these particular structures significantly affect victims' way of understanding who they are and how they generate meaning of reconciliation. Further examination will be presented in the thematic analysis.

6.3 Investigating Narrative Themes[516]

This section reports the thematic analysis. This type of analysis focuses on emerging themes from what participants provided in their autobiographical telling and writing as narrative data. By presenting themes coherently, the research questions can be responded. For this task, I read the transcriptions with reflexivity, categorized each theme, and interpreted the categorized themes with reference to the structural analysis.

Based on the aforementioned structural characteristics, the thematic analysis found that those victims' narratives converged under an umbrella theme of 'expansion of historical memory'. Historical memory is a social form of memory of the past, and it is associated with forming

[516] As this study investigates both the structural formation of obtained data and their thematic commonality, it is essential to clarify what narrative themes mean. In this study, I use narrative themes to refer to common topics emerging from victims' autobiographical narratives. In presenting narrative themes-although themes are divergent by each informant-I categorized groups of similar themes that were shared within the data and integrated them with superordinate themes to make each theme coherent. This process of categorization and integration was through my interpretation. Therefore, higher subjects are an abstract to encompass subordinating themes. These themes are explained by narrative evidence.

collective narratives and ethnic or national identity.[517] Because historical events are remembered and interpreted in the present, it is dependent on an intentional knowledge of the past. That is to say, what to remember about past events is determined by political contestation and ethical intentions, and it produces regimes of memory.[518] By its selective nature, theorists contend, historical memory promotes a group sense of belonging to society,[519] supports political and national projects,[520] and forms historical and political representation.[521]

As for historical memory, what is critical to this discussion is that individuals, as observed by Anderson, develop their autobiographies and identities not only as personal accounts but also with a connection to the state, which provides individuals with a national identity via historical, collective memory from the constructed and reinterpreted history.[522] Corresponding to this, some victims in this study composed their autobiographies, addressing national identity and historical interpretation of past events. In this form of autobiography, their awareness of historical memory from which experience was excluded, was a motivation for their stories. As noted, when victims utilized their stories as counternarratives to the conventional historical memory, they appealed to the expansion of historical memory, in order to include their experiences so they could preserve their sense of belonging to the nation.

To understand the core theme more adequately, two aspects need to be noted here. First, when participants made their autobiographies as counternarratives to transform the conventional narratives, they denied the official memory of the past, which does not remember those citizens' victimization. They lay on the margin of democratic state-building, on the one hand, and called for self-emancipation from suppressed memories on the other. Some participants in this study were aware that their memories and interpretations may be subjugated to anti-communist narratives and education throughout their lifespan. These victims struggle to emancipate themselves from those unfavorable memories, and called for other victims to develop objective historical interpretation. In this sense, the expansion of historical memory is an appeal not just to the society but also to themselves, who endure the suppressed memories.

Second, the core theme is an articulation of a paradoxical identity confusion between national

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[517] Zheng Wang, *Memory Politics, Identity and Conflict Historical Memory as a Variable* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, New Edition (London; New York: Verso, 2006); Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*.
[518] Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, eds., *Regimes of Memory* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011).
[519] Halbwachs; Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, 5th ed. (München: C.H.Beck, 2011); Paez and Liu, 'Collective Memory of Conflicts'.
[520] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
[521] J.H. Liu and D. Hilton, 'How the Past Weights on the Present: Social Representations of History and Their Impact on Identity Politics', *British Journal of Psychiatry* 44 (2005): 537–56; Jennifer Cole, 'Narratives and Moral Projects: Generational Memories of the Malagasy 1947 Rebellion', *Ethos* 31, no. 1 (2003): 95–126.
[522] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

identity and victimhood. That is, while victims maintained their national identity, which gives them a sense of belonging to the nation, their experience of victimhood ironically opposes the popular sense of national identity. Victims identifying themselves as Korean when they describe the historical sense of their life stories struggle with the fact that their historical experience does not match the traditional interpretation of history because of their victimization, as they have been betrayed by both the state and the society. Both as Koreans and victims, the participants discovered an identity dilemma, deriving from the discrepancy between these two identities. Realizing the tension, they develop their storylines to assert that the conventional historical memory and narratives must be transformed according to their experience, and therefore, victims can also be part of history and society. Reconciliation is then perceived as something transforming the conventional narratives.

To make sense of the central theme leading to the idea of reconciliation, I first address how the victims defend their historical minds and their roles, aiming at the expansion of historical memory and narratives in their autobiographies. Second, some themes of victims' self-recognition will be presented. These themes show that they understand themselves as subjective historical and moral agents. These analyses will culminate in some meaning of reconciliation that the victims provided along with this narrative reasoning.

Anchoring Nationalism in Historical Mind

The expansion of historical memory points to respondents' nationalism expressed in their historical mind.[523] Participants' narratives embedded in their historical mind aligned with nationalism. Although victims' historical experience and memory collide with the official historical memory, they tended to adopt nationalism in making sense of their experience as victims and their national identity as Korean. Looking at the historical procedure before and after the war provided them with a historical perspective on the violent events and their meaning of suffering. In doing so, they broadened their views on what history is, and who they are and what they ought to do in the historical context. Three themes emerged in this regard: Korean nationalism, the pride of Koreans, and victims as suppressed yet devoted citizens. These themes

[523] Historical mind or historicity, according to Paul Ricoeur, infers one's orientation of seeking historical authenticity and truth through historical memory. With historical mind, autobiographical authors describe their life events in historical contexts and make meaning of their life within historical conditions because the genuine truth of their lives can be obtained through the lens of the historical context. In this sense, victims as autobiographical authors put their stories lines in the historical background for their historical mind. For historical mind and historicity, see, Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer, Edition Unstated edition (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

interrelate with each other in the light of expansion of historical narratives.

Aligning with Korean Nationalism

Victims' historical mind in their autobiographies is deeply engaged with their defense of Korean nationalism. The nationalism that these participants addressed refers to the Korean patriotic ideology, which occurred and developed during the fall of the Joseon dynasty in the late 19th century and the advent of Japanese rule after 1910.[524] According to scholars, Korean nationalism had risen in the form of protection of the country from the influx of foreigners such as traders, missionaries, and military troops at the end of the Joseon dynasty. This was transformed into anti-Japanese sentiments mobilized by elite nationalist groups throughout the colonial period (1910-1945). Ever since, nationalism in modern Korean history has extensively developed with patriotic sentiments, endorsing independence and autonomy from foreign powers, and supported by nationalist political leaders.[525] In this context, Korean nationalism refers to Korean people's self-governance and determination from foreign occupations throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

Korean nationalism, however, took a complex turn for the Korean people, experiencing independence, the Korea War, and the division. Korea as a single nation and the people started to segregate along with ideological lines of liberalism and communism, both of which developed rapidly before and after the independence. After 1945, Rhee Syngman and Kim Il-Sung had attempted to establish the Korean people's nation as a new state with the help of the U.S. as well as the Soviet Union respectively as explained in Chapter 2. Two political leaders and their followers wanted to unite the ideologically segregated nation through the war. During the chaotic situations, individual Koreans and their families were categorized by their thought while witnessing the Korean nation divided into two different states. In the suddenly changed political circumstances, although the original sense of nationalism still held its meaning of self-determination of the Korean people, it came to be a dual concept faced with one Korean ethnic

[524] Michael Edson Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925* (Seattle; Washington: University of Washington Press, 2014). According to Robinson, Korean nationalism is characterized by the anti-foreign slogan and programs, which was marked by the 1894 Tonghak Rebellion, which, he sees, is the nascence of mass Korean nationalism. The rebellion was essentially associated with Tonghak religion, but ultimately was designed to oppose the Western influence into Korea. Although in the initial phase, Korean nationalism was growing in the form of the peasants rebellion, it was led and developed by intellectual nationalist elite groups at the end of the 19th century when some young elites adopted a new form of nation-building, maintaining Koreans' autonomy. This development of Korean nationalism was linked to the resistance against the colonial foreign power mobilized by religious and nationalist political elites.

[525] Sheila Miyoshi Jager, *Narratives of Nation Building in Korea: A Genealogy of Patriotism* (New York; London: An East Gate Book, 2003); Cheol-Hee Park, 'Historical Memory and the Resurgence of Nationalism: A Korean Perspective', in *East Asia's Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism*, ed. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa and Kazuhiko Togo (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), 190–204.

group and two Korean nation-states irreconcilable: that is, nationalism indicates either Korean nation composed of a single ethnic identity or state-centric political ideology.

Participants of this study were in line with the former meaning of nationalism. They were aware of the historical development that Korean people have confronted in South and North Korea's statehood. They understood that it is not the nation itself that segregated Korean people but the state-power who wanted political dominance over the nation. The Korean War and civilian massacres were triggered by the irreconcilable ideologies in concert with the statehood. Therefore, participants used the Korean nationalism with the anti-colonial interpretation, that pursues the Korean nation, that existed prior to the foreign regimes. In this sense, participants tried to link their victimization to the nationalist line of history as nationalist independence activists, most of whom were socialists, explains their family's victimization. The Rhee Syngman administration hired pro-Japanese collaborators for administrative expediency, and they thoroughly suppressed nationalist independence activists affiliated with socialism with the inherited power. Participants contended, such activists, as well as their families who followed the activists, were victimized by unjust state political power in the name of democratic nation-building before and during the war. For this reason, by aligning with Korean nationalism, they expressed how they understand why civilian massacres took place on the one hand, and they still belong to the Korean nation, which will be reunited eventually on the other. While speaking from this perspective, victims adopted patriotic sentiments as an interpretative framework of their stories, trying to align their narratives with those of nationalists as transmitted to them and maintaining their national identity as Korean.

Amongst others, for example, Choi Young-Sup developed his narratives in this way. As noted in the structural analysis, these participants tended to rely extensively on the historical background of civilian massacres, and Choi began his story by telling why the event of civilian massacres happened around 1950. The purpose of this way of narration seems to express his nationalist narratives.

> After Independence in 1945, the conflict between the rightists and the leftists was substantial. Reading the declassified US documents that investigated the southern Korean peoples' thoughts at that time, shows that 70 percent were socialists and 7 percent were communists. So, most people were socialists. (…) We should know that those Korean people who followed socialism were the elite, not the proletariats This is a very distinctive feature of Korean leftism and socialism. We should start from this fact. After independence, their voices were stronger than others. So…. it is important. Yes, so.. eh.. But! But…um… the U.S. refused them. The U.S. feared the Korean elite

> socialist groups who were so-called nationalists because they had awakened. So they utilized the pro-Japanese opportunists to govern the southern part of Korea. This caused a severe suppression of the elite groups, labelling them as communists, and many were killed under Rhee Syngman's government. But this trick had already been used by the Japanese to govern us effectively.

Another example of this aspect appeared in the autobiography of Yoon Ho-Sang, who is the leader of the national victims' association. In his personal story, he extensively talked about his father, who was arrested and killed as a political opponents and for his accomplishments as an educator of people during the Japanese regime. The first half of his life story is a description of his father; what he had done as a nationalist independence activist. Revealing pride in his father, Yoon stated that his father is the direct motivation for his present identity and actions. The pride appears together with this family identity as a nationalist family. His intention of telling his father's story is to express how nationalist his family and himself were and are. In the middle of his story, he expressed that his father is incarnated in himself. By telling this, he strengthened his nationalist narratives.

> Erm, I have been following my father' traces of the past. I felt like I am never able to understand him, but after I had entered my 70s, now I, kind of, grasped his life, motivations, and so on. It is substantial to me. I feel it in my skin. I still have his belongings. Whenever I touch them, I understand what kind of life he wanted to live and what vision he dreamt about for this nation. These sorts of feeling are, I believe, embodied in me deeply. It feels like it is so… obvious… like incarnated substance.

Another participant, Lee Kai-Sung also expressed his nationalist identity in a similar manner. His narratives indirectly revealed that his father was influenced by a nationalist activist, and his death needs to be understood within an accurate historical interpretation.

> My father was very close to Mr. Yo Un-hyung [*a representative moderate leftist activist for Korean independence*]. He started to participate in the independence movement at the age of 18, and I remember that he talked a lot about Mr. Yo Un-hyung. I am sure, Yo gave my father a tremendous inspiration of nationalism and independence. (…) Because my father did those kinds of activities [*proudly*], he was arrested and my mom, younger sister and myself had to flee from surveillance and stayed in Mt. Jiri,

hiding even before the war.

Both Lee and Yoon showed their pride in the deceased by adopting nationalist narratives. Based on that, Yoon, in particular, explained his motivation for these activities when I asked what his father meant to him now. He said, "I fight for injustice and work for other victims, because my father would also have done the same. I just follow what my father as a nationalist would have done for this country." After this, he continued to tell his story in the manner of nationalist narratives.

That way, nationalism is embodied in victims' autobiographies with their historical mind. Their memory of the deceased led them to accept the historical interpretation that leads to Korean nationalism. In developing their autobiographies in this way, their perspectives on civilian massacres and suffering are viewed through the nationalist sense of history. It shows victims' interpretation that the deceased were nationalists who once fought for the independence during the Japanese rules and yet were unjustly killed because they were leftists in the time of political transition. Interestingly, they keep the nationalist understanding of modern Korean history, in order to make sense of the bereavement of their family members and to complain about victimization. At the same time, this position is justified by victims when they assert that they are historical subjects who experiences the dark side of history with the nationalist point of view. This point will be further described in the next section.

Pride as Korean

Without a doubt, victims' alignment with Korean nationalism raised their national identity as Korean.[526] The nationalist historical interpretation allowed them to express that they are Korean and to defend the autonomy of the nation. Crucially, this appears in the form of their pride as Korean people, who are distinctive from other ethnic groups and yet had been suppressed by foreign powers. This study found that pride played a role as a critical promoter of interpretation. It encouraged victims to understand that the historical wrongs and their suffering originate in previous injustice under Japanese colonialism in the Korean peninsula, and that the political situation encircling the peninsula enflamed the ideological division between the Korean people.

[526] Recent quantitative research has shown that there is an obvious correlation between national identity and national pride in the South Korean context. Although they are conceptually different from each other, they are closely connected, and often emerged as forms of patriotism and nationalism. See Shang E. Ha and Seung-Jin Jang, 'National Identity, National Pride, and Happiness: The Case of South Korea', *Social Indicators Research* 121, no. 2 (2015): 471–82.

That is, pride broadened victims' perspective on how to view historical wrongs.

Interestingly, pride had different senses in victims' narratives. Some showed a sense of belonging to the nation and responsibility to history, and others described it with a sense of destiny. Despite the diverse meaning, victims adopted pride as an interpretative tool. These narratives are well addressed in their autobiographies.

> We Koreans must recover our pride as being Koreans. We can restore our self-esteem and dignity. We are talking about civilian massacres but it started from foreign power, strictly speaking. Our consciousness of the past and perspective on peace is heavily subjugated to the foreign powers, but we must recover our autonomous way of achieving peace.
>
> (Choi Young-Sup)

> I believe that we, Koreans, are different. I mean, violence, suppression, wars… These are not what Korean do. Koreans love peace. We love nonviolence. We can act differently. But I feel very sorrowful when I think about how our history has evolved.
>
> (Yoon Ho-Sang)

> I mean, of course, I am Korean. It is an undeniable fact. I don't mean to deny this. Actually, I feel sometimes lucky by the fact that I live in this country in comparison to other countries. Although I was living a very difficult life before, it does not change my identity as… Korean, you know?
>
> (Jung Man-Ho)

> No matter what, I am a Korean. I am a Korean before a victim. So it is.
>
> (Lee Kai-Sung)

> Still, I am proud of being Korean. I live in this country, my homeland.
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

Despite state-sponsored political violence and experience of social stigmatization, victims emphasized their identification as Korean. That is, they are not just victims of political violence, but historical victims harmed by broader political power and injustice imposed on the Korean

people. Rooted in this perspective, victims overcome the narrower insight on the violence, but enlarge their view. These participants, indeed, appeal to the holistic perspective. Following this enlarged perspective, they revisited the meaning of victimization and suffering, and restated it. This kind of narrative raised their awareness that the present historical memory and narrative need to include their memory and experience.

> What we victims have to do is not to walk on the same route. Even if a war broke out again, we mustn't revenge our enemies. We have to see this problem, asking why, how, and by whom the killing happened in the holistic historical angle, to understand the present and to make a plan for the future. We should not live with impatience and endless anger.
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

> It is very important to understand what happened in the war, concerning the historical context. People simply focus on the war, and who killed whom. But this is quite partial. The real issues of the killing won't be properly discovered unless one looks at where they came from.
>
> (Jung Man-Ho)

> I always think that we victims must overcome a narrower view on this situation. If we take one step back, we are able to know how to understand this. We can objectively see the past and the present. It is easier said than done because we are stakeholders. But what I think is that a broader view on the war and history is necessary.
>
> (Choi Young-Sup)

In this way, pride-centered narratives coupled with nationalism governed victims' narrative reasoning and motivated them to adopt a mature historical interpretation. This underlines that victims developed a historical perspective that finds out the root causes of violence in the broader historical context, rather than remain in the narrower one which is restricted to their feeling of victimhood only. They thought that having a broader perspective may emancipate their limited views on violence and suffering. Their pride as Korean enables them to equip such a transformative view. This is why they attempt to embrace the complexity of and flaw in Korean history, and so endure the unforgettable memories bothering them.

Portraying Victims as Suppressed yet Devoted Citizens

When victims overtly expressed their national identity by adopting nationalist sentiments and trying to have an objective historical perspective, they made use of autobiographical storytelling and writing as an opportunity to testify that they have been suppressed, although their family and themselves were and are either nationalists or people who are loyal to the nation. While developed in the form of counternarratives to the popular historical memory and interpretation, their portraits emerged as historically proudly Koreans and at the same time as suppressed victims. Their autobiographical descriptions as suppressed victims shed light on their experience as 'second class citizens'. During the autocratic regimes, from the 1960s to the 1980s, victims were labelled as communists, and because of social stigma, could not engage in any social activities, being regarded as non-citizens.[527] However, victims in this study also described themselves as loyal and devoted citizens who faithfully abided by national obligations and duties. It seems that they appeal to the fact that they were once victimized by historical wrongs and needed to be treated as ordinary citizens without further discrimination and stigmatization. In this light, their autobiographies presented a victim identity dilemma, between being both patriotic Koreans and victims, and so concluded in a dialectic position: suppressed, yet devoted citizens. This dialectic arises from their national identity.

Lee Kai-Sung reported that he calls himself communist. His story fully described his life as communist, focusing on how he had to survive social stigmatization. In his narrative, he expressed the word 'commies' over twenty times, and sometimes used words such as 'shepherd' and 'servant' as terms equivalent to 'commie'. These self-descriptions are embedded in his consciousness as he has been living for survival. By writing his autobiography in this way, he defended his view that he maintained a diligent life as a decent citizen. In his monologue:

> Although this society calls me commie, I lived as a good citizen. I tried my best to live prototypically. I cannot record every detail of my life, but I can say one thing. That is, no one can look down me in terms of commitment to this nation. I am proud of myself, living in this way, always doing my best.

Others similarly disclosed that:

[527] Lee, 'The Boundaries between "Citizens" and "Non-Citizens"'.

> What I always think whenever I tell this story is that no matter how myself and my family were victimized, we are citizens of South Korea anyways. I know, I cannot properly express how I and other victims suffered throughout our lives and are unable to understand this tragedy imposed on us. But, nonetheless… nonetheless, if we are destined, so to speak, to live in this country, we all ought to do our duty to live as citizens. (…) We are citizens of this country after all. To live in this country, we must understand our victimization in the light of the historical process and policies unjustly made by an ideological war, not in light of personal and revengeful emotions and interminable animosity towards the country… If so, we will lose an impartial perspective on who we are.
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

> Despite that, I do my best as a citizen. I can tell you, no one in this country has lived as diligently as I did. I am devoted. While I experienced bad treatment in the past, I don't hold the grudge forever and don't want to pass it on even to my children.
>
> (Jung Man-Ho)

However, these dialectic narratives are an outcome of their realization that they have no choice but to live in the country that victimized and betrayed them. They were not allowed to express their bereavement, anger, and rights in the past. The experience of living as communists became chronic, leading them to an acceptance of a suppressed, yet resistant kind of life. What they could do in the past and present is that they have to prove that they are loyal and devoted to the country to be regarded the same as other citizens. Thus, this is a narrative outcome of the longstanding acceptance of struggle from discrimination. For them, telling these narratives seemed an attempt at self-purification to set themselves free from continued suppression and stigmatization.

In this sense, a noteworthy tendency of the victims is that they defended a hope for an inclusive society. They regarded that their and others' stories could appeal to an aspiration for an inclusive society that recognizes their experience and no longer discriminates against them. This notion is developed when victims asserted that society ought to include victims and their life experiences in wider sociohistorical narratives.

> Since I have flung myself into this work [*as the leader of the National Victims Association*], I have had a vast number of opportunities to listen to other victims' stories. Too sorrowful. In particular, female victims' stories are… their stories are

mostly unheard. You cannot imagine how miserably they managed their lives to survive. This society ought to listen to their stories!

(Yoon Ho-Sang)

I still do not know where exactly my father was killed. That is why I meet other victims. We often gather together. In doing so, I can listen to others' stories. I want to help them because it is only me who understands them fully. I feel their grievance and sadness. But I hope each local government can do something for us. We are already too old and getting older day by day. I don't know what the government can do now, but each local government may have some budget to help us.

(Choi Young-Sup)

My story is just one of many. There are too many untold stories. Those stories must be heard. More attempts are needed to acknowledge those stories; otherwise, victims will die without solving the problem.

(Lee Se-Chan)

Victims who were motivated by national identity, as presented in this analysis showed their wider understanding of national history, through which they make sense of the violent evens and their lives of suffering thereafter. These victims notably revealed that they were in line with the nationalist side of history. That is, they interpreted their victimization in the light of Korean nationalism. This sense of interpretation was rooted in their national identity as Korean. They cultivated a meaning of Koreans who have collectively suffered in modern history. This historical and national mind motivated them to compose their autobiographies to shape a broader frame through which to view civilian massacres with the broader angle of history. Nonetheless, at the same time, victims narrated their victimhood as a historical fact. In doing so, the participants expressed their suffering on the one hand, and proved that they are loyal and devoted citizens on the other. In these victims' narratives, a paradox is apparent because they uphold the national identity interpreting modern nationalist Korean history, and yet they suffered from the society to which they belong.

This type of narrative, as will be seen, developed victims' subjectivity in interpreting history, as well as a humanistic and moral mindset. Importantly, meanings of reconciliation were stated in this sort of subjectivity and mindset. In this sense, reconciliation was deemed to play a role in

healing the country's in dark history and continued injustice.

Self-Recognition: Who am I in historical injustice?

Developing autobiography is narrative processing of responding to the questions, who I am and how I came to be. Images of selfhood are narrated and reflected in the recounting process. Participants' autobiographies in this study also addressed their self-recognition in the process of remembering what they have experienced and telling what they see now. They rearticulated who they are, how they came to be, and what they ought to do in the middle of suffering and in the future. This experience of narrative processing gave participants an opportunity to develop their self-images. Moreover, it may help them to overcome the traumatic memory and chronic anxiety arising from a life of suffering.[528]

Historical mind and nationalism that were explored above influenced these victims' self-images. These victims tended to have an historical sense of the self in their autobiographies. When perceiving the question, who I am, they thought of it with regard to their location in a particular historical context: that is, the self-image within a conditional historical setting. From the historical sense of the self, the victims, specifically, exposed their ethical vision of the society, contending that they and their suffering can deliver an important message to the society.

Historical Subject

A distinctive theme of self-recognition among those respondents is historical subject. Historical subject means that victims are living witnesses who subjectively interpret historical procedure based on their lived experiences. They believe they can provide different perspectives on national history, through testifying about what they have experienced. In their eyes, the official historical narrative of contemporary Korean history does not tell the dark side of history that they experienced. Social memory of the past is limited to the history of victors, whereas victims' untold historical records are forgotten. This one-sided historical memory needs to be supplemented with their stories. Importantly, this image has something to do with collective experience of victims, as they do not merely focus on themselves but on who victims are in history. Therefore, self-recognition as a historical subject was revealed when victims thought about what collective

[528] For the functions of storytelling, see Guthrey, *Victim Healing and Truth Commissions*.

victimhood can contribute.

Amongst others, Yoon Ho-Sang, in the second half of his narrative, elaborated a perspective of why victims ought to be historical subjects in modern Korean history and what they can do for the expansion of partial historical memory.

> Erm, I have to tell this too. It is very important. You know, our voices were entirely silenced. Today's situation is not so different from the past. We victims have felt very discouraged and angry. We may be undereducated than others. I admit, we probably don't know much about history like historians but [*raising voice*] we can tell... we can speak to the world with our experience! Our memories are accurate. Isn't this the real history? I believe, we are the history! Experts and historians alike must listen to what we say. (…) We have felt abandoned. People have treated us like animals in the zoo. They know who we are but never listen to what we say. I am deeply disappointed, thinking that although we are the history itself, no one really wants to listen to our voices. That's why I work for the transformation of this society.

In his mind, their voices are a critical instrument of national history because they can tell what civilians have experienced in real life. So, he contended that history needs their stories, which furnish the genuine experience of people. Lee Kai-Sung stated a similar concept.

> We victims were living under unwritten law. We were suppressed and were living in insufferable poverty and sorrow. For the last seven decades, our tongues were cut and our hands were tied hard. Whenever we meet together and share the stories, we cry poignantly, hugging each other like homeless kids. (…) But, I always think, history is nothing but our stories. Stories we share are history itself. We are history.

Other participants further developed this perspective. Both Choi Young-Sup and Lee Se-Chan critically reflected what themselves and other victims ought to do, in order to be historical subjects. For Choi, victims are also influenced by the official narratives, in particular, anti-communism sentiment. Without historical awareness, victims may repeat the historical narratives, by which they were suppressed. He urged himself and other victims to develop a fair interpretation and views on history. Lee, as well, encouraged victims to look back on the past objectively and behave differently. Only in so doing, they argued, can victims be emancipated from the wrongful past.

> That's why when we [*victims*] look back on our lives, we should have a fair perspective on the past. We shouldn't be biased. Although my parents were killed, we shouldn't hate offenders forever nor follow the anti-communism ideology. A balanced and holistic view on the history in the long-term perspective sets us free. (…) We are slaves of ideologies. It is almost impossible to be objective at all time. But it's a trap. We blindly support politicians who speak of the justification of killing. Our blindness allows those radicalized politicians to exist still today. "Kill Commies!" No one questions that claim because we are educated to feel that it is justified.
>
> (Choi Young-Sup)

> For our part, we have to realize that what happened in the war was a disaster in the dark time. What we victims have to do is not to walk the same route. Even if a war broke out again, we mustn't revenge our enemies. We have to see this problem, asking why, how, and by whom the killing happened in the holistic historical angle, to understand the present and to make a plan for the future. We should not live with impatience and endless anger. I share this with other victims… So, we all agree that if the government meets our aspiration, we are happy to start a new future for this country. We shouldn't think differently.
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

Victims' self-realization as historical subject appeared in these ways. To reiterate, this type of recognition comes from their historical awareness that official history is partial and records biased information about the past. It is victims' collective reaction to the conventional historical memory, which, as noted, does not properly acknowledge their historical experience as victims and suffering. For them, history, if it is genuine, ought to include and record what they saw and remember. In this light, they become the historical subject as nobody has recorded history truthfully, and only they can do this task. This self-image is connected to how victims aspire to the expansion of historical memory. Importantly, this aspect, as will be seen, supports their articulation of victim-centeredness in dealing with the past as the critical ethic for reconciliation.

Moral Agent

While portraying themselves as historical subjects, some participants stated diverse moral

sentiments. When focusing on what history ought to be like, they expanded their perspective on national history and suffering with moral aspects of war and humanity. These victims' narratives presented moral statements about life, death, war and human rights. These moral sentiments emphasize their realization that despite the partial historical memory and victimization, they hold a conscientious and holistic understanding of history with a mature perspective on true human nature and how their suffering can contribute to the betterment of society. By stating this moral wisdom, they justified how they have abided by moral principles, learning from their experiences. In this sense, they understand that they are moral agents, who have empathy towards perpetrators and others victims of violence, and so take the moral responsibility to build a peaceful society.

This aspect of self-recognition corresponds to the concept of altruism born of suffering (ABS), which refers to victims' deep and prosocial commitment to preventing future suffering and the pursuit of healing of the self and social transformation through empathetic meaning after traumatic events.[529] Some victims in this study have shown a high level of altruistic mind. This analysis found that victims' altruistic mind comes from their self-recognition as moral agents. ABS is rooted in how victims see themselves as moral agents and how they can contribute to build a just society. This was not obvious in others' narratives but only in those victims who were motivated by national identity.

Those victims provided some moral views on war and human beings. In particular, they focused on a moral teaching of 'respect for all living beings' when they interpreted the meaning of wars and human beings. Both Choi Young-Sup and Yoon Ho-Sang, who highlighted the historical aspect of victimhood, expressed this sentiment as they started appraising their victimhood and suffering. By articulating moral sentiments, they appealed to a transformed perspective on war, human beings, and a vision of society. Choi, amongst others, advanced esteem for all living beings four times. He spoke of this ethic as if it is a conclusion of his story.

> The killing we are talking about is a culture of exclusion and a culture of massacres. That is why violence repeats even today. You know, no matter what, we must, we must keep the dignity of human beings. (…) Under the culture of killing, my father was a legitimate person to be killed. I have been thinking about the reason why my father had to be killed.

[529] Vollhardt, 'Altruism Born of Suffering and Prosocial Behavior Following Adverse Life Events'; Staub and Vollhardt, 'Altruism Born of Suffering'; Johanna Vollhardt and Ervin Staub, 'Inclusive Altruism Born of Suffering: The Relationship Between Adversity and Prosocial Attitudes and Behavior Toward Disadvantaged Outgroups', *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 81, no. 3 (2011): 307–15.

He wondered and doubted about the culture of exclusion which, he thinks, is deeply embedded in society. In his eyes, this culture of killing is inherited throughout history, so that people become oblivious to the value of lives. From this point of view, he advocated wider and more objective views on war and human beings. He associated moral perspectives with victim who witnessed and suffered from the past evil. He thought that victims, even though they suffer, are at the forefront of moral behaviors in the presence of historical injustice and political violence.

> This eventually comes from no love, no mercy, and no compassion toward other human beings. What we [*victims*] can do is to become a cornerstone for non-repetition of wars and um… respect for living beings. Because we have witnessed the radicalized ideology throughout our lives, we can tell... we can prove how such politically justified violence can bring enormous suffering to people. (…) We are aware that too many people today are suffering from the culture of killing… and um… indeed people are killed. To break the evil, we need to have a sense of respect for others and other beings. To anyone. You know? We are familiar with killing others. I never let my grandchildren play violent video games. I always alert them not to kill any creature…

Yoon Ho-Sang talked about the same sense of morality. He spoke of the ethic of the esteem of all living beings as a human rights value. His understanding came from his realization that victims were discriminated against. He equated victims' lives to the 'life of animals'. This made him defend victims' human rights, and this notion is developed with this ethic sentiment of awe for all living beings.

> What I have felt until today since the first day of this activity, is that human rights are essential and how easily human lives can be dismissed. So, human beings are the most precious thing. Society must protect this. This is what I feel. But, then, for my part, I deliberately avoid killing anything. Even a flower on the street. Why? They are also living beings. I want to always be conscientious. Otherwise, others also don't do the same to us. Awe for all living being. (…) This resonates my mind significantly.

The concern for respect expands even to their enemies. They showed a high level of humanistic mind toward their offenders, not carrying out revengeful acts and forgetting about their killings.

For victims to be genuinely transformed in the ethical sense, they do not only seek their aspirations but also take moral actions and mind towards their perpetrators. Breaking the cycle of evil is the right action for victims to take so that they can overcome their collective victimhood. Their narratives show that they are making these altruistic statements because they are concerned for the betterment of society, and that they acknowledge that the offenders are also Koreans who found themselves in an unavoidable historical situation. They are also victims of dark history.

> Also, I think, there must be an identifiable individual who actually killed my father. I mean the person who shoot the bullet to my father's head. Huh? Think about it. My father was killed because someone killed him. Well, if I took this very personally, if I knew who he was, I would have found his whereabouts and killed him. But that is a temporary emotion. On second thoughts, everyone at that time were victims of the disgusting history. (…) We must admit the weakness of human beings. You know, both victims and offenders are… just human beings. Nothing else. If we are hungry, no matter who they are, we are going to fight for food to live. What happened is a tragedy of feeble humans in the war.
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

It is critical to note that victims linked their historical understanding to morality. Their tendency to altruism and morality is, however, based on their experiences of discrimination and social exclusion. The memory of living as children of communists encouraged them to search for a deeper understanding of the essence of human beings. This seems to be a reaction to their life of suffering; participants adopted humanistic mind when talking about their enemies and people in general. Their humanistic mind appeals to the fact that violence and discrimination must be halted and no one should be treated differently. From this point of view, they expressed awe for all living beings and human rights. What is important to note is that by describing themselves as moral agents in this regard, victims revealed that they are distinct from those who suppressed them and must act morally.

Realization of moral agency seemed to promote victims' meaning-making about reconciliation as a socially demanded value. In their minds, altruistic and moral behaviors arising from suffering illustrate who they are as historical subjects under continued victimization. This recognition is rooted in their pride in the nation and concern for society, and reconciliation is thus an essential factor for a mature society.

Narrative Meaning of Reconciliation[530]

The aforementioned sets of narratives are oriented to transform the conventional historical memory and narratives that have not properly included individuals' victimization and experiences. Victims developed their stories to expand the partial and crystalized historical memory. Through these narratives, they envisaged a mature society, confronting the dark side of history and its healing wounds.

Reconciliation for these victims was conceived in line with their aspirations for a mature society, which confronts the evil past and recognizes their experience as victimized civilians. For them, social amnesia of their victimization and experiences during and after the massacres have been the main hurdle for achieving reconciliation. Reconciliation, as they commonly argued, is truly related to transforming historical memory and narratives, because it is the most effective way to build a restorative society in the aftermath of political violence and is the key social and historical cornerstone of Korea as a whole. There are three meaning of reconciliation, and these meanings, as shall be seen, went beyond what reconciliation is and provide more about why it is critical and how it ought to be practiced.

Victim-centered dealing with the past

Reconciliation is regarded as a social and moral value in deeply divided societies. It draws citizens attention to reflect on what has gone wrong in the past and how they have redressed the legacies of violent past. It brings stakeholders in violent conflict to the center of dealing with the past. In doing so, reconciliation aims at social integration and develops democracy in these societies.[531] In this understanding, both victims and perpetrators need to be recognized as equal social

[530] Narrative meaning of reconciliation indicates themes around reconciliation conceived during narrative processing. This study assumes that participants' narrative processing presents their subjective interpretation of the past, present, and future, and while telling and writing their life stories, participants not only remember what has happened in the past but also evaluate the present and make a plan for the future. Resting on this, participants in this study are expected to think and appraise meaning of reconciliation, directly and indirectly, centering around the reflection of their suffering and selfhood. As for meaning, I aimed to discover not only what victims think what reconciliation is but also their opinions about what it ought to be and what it can do to transform society. As participants think of the term reconciliation on the basis of their experience in the aftermath of political violence, which protracts social conflict, searching for the meaning of reconciliation in victims' narratives was both definitional and functional. To present each meaning of reconciliation effectively, I categorized different themes which represent the broader meaning of reconciliation based on the previous literature.

[531] David A. Crocker, 'Punishment, Reconciliation, and Democratic Deliberation', *Buffalo Criminal Law Review* 5, no. 2 (2002): 509–49; Darrel Moellendorf, 'Reconciliation as a Political Value', *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38, no. 2 (2007): 205–21.

members.[532] However, as numerous scholars have argued, victims' voices in these societies are often silenced in the process of reconciliation. Their perspectives and experiences are largely ignored by and subjugated to how national elites and other experts view what reconciliation ought to be. In this realization, a growing number of scholars in previous studies have noted that victim-centered dealing with the past leads the vision of reconciliation.[533]

Some participants in this study affirmed this aspect, asserting that reconciliation is victim-centered dealing with the past. They felt that they were excluded in the institutional process of truth-recovery and other activities in the name of promoting reconciliation.[534] According to them, national attempts at dealing with the past are led by a few experts, and they felt thoroughly marginalized in those processes. Experts' and historians' visions of resettlement of society do not sufficiently include their experience, and therefore they had to remain silent on the margin of the mechanism of historical justice and reconciliation.

For them, victims playing a central role in liquidation of the past are essential for reconciliation. This awareness comes from their self-recognition as historical subjects. For them to be subjective commentators on history, they argued for their centrality in the process of correcting the wrongful past. In this position, participants provided in-depth opinions on why victims need to be central and how this process ought to be practiced. These narratives are related to their aspirations of the expansion of historical memory and narratives, and they did so by raising their voices with a broader understanding of history. For example, Yoon Ho-Sang, having complained about expert-driven TRC and related practices, ardently emphasized victims' subjectivity in the practices.

> You know, I have been most deeply disappointed by how the process of dealing with the past proceeded. There was always 'them', not 'us'. We victims were like the invisible man. (…) Therefore, I share this thought with other victims. That is, we victims are the subjects of dealing with the past. We must be at the center of it, not commissioners or activists. We must stand at the center of history… to deliver victims' suffering to society. (…) Eventually, what surviving and bereaved family members want is reconciliation after finding truth. Yes, let's reconcile. Let's bring this to an end and forget. But it is not happening now. Why not? That is because the people and their descendants who suppressed us still hold the political power. (…) That's why victims are so critical, in order to promote reconciliation in society. We can tell, we can testify.

[532] Moellendorf, 'Reconciliation as a Political Value'.
[533] For this discussion, see Chapter 3.
[534] The Framework Act on Clearing up Past Incidents for Truth and Reconciliation showed that the TRC seeks social integration and reconciliation by reckoning with the past. For this discussion, see Kim, 'Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission'.

Interestingly, while stating this, he also provided a meaning of reconciliation in a historic and restorative sense. He linked the 'victim-perpetrator' relationship to a broader vision of reconciliation. This point of view is line with a perspective that the micro level of reconciliation supports the macro one or historical reconciliation in his eyes.[535] His understanding is rooted in the victim perspective.

> Many people tend to overlook the importance of the relationship between victims and perpetrators. We shouldn't undervalue the personal emotion. Historical reconciliation… Yes, eventually, it might mean a desirable goal of reconciliation. But it comes only after we feel recovered. In other words, victims must reconcile with perpetrators. Its precondition is that perpetrators acknowledge their wrongs and restore victims' impaired reputations. If so, broader historical reconciliation will come very naturally. That is why I assert that victims are the subject of dealing with the past.

Other participants also supported this point of view. Their understanding of victim-centered reconciliation is related to their recognition as a historical subject and a moral agent. Choi Young-Sup stated a reflective sentiment around reconciliation when he spoke about victims' moral capacity in their present and future behaviors. He urged victims to carefully and ethically think about what they can and have to do, in order to realize reconciliation concerning social circumstances.

> There is no doubt that we have to play a role. I mean a role that changes people's biased views on us. But what I think is the most important thing to do so is doing things peacefully. As I said earlier, we need to respect all living beings. Flukes and temporary solutions only worsen the situation, without transforming the structure of the existing conflict. We [*victims*] need to think about what we can do peacefully. Broadly. Slowly. Embracing others. We must know what we are doing. (…) Of course, things like memorial towers are, well, necessary. But, nonetheless, those things should be implemented carefully; otherwise dealing with the past brings about another conflict. We can't force our views on others and *vice versa*.

[535] Rama Mani, 'Rebuilding an Inclusive Political Community After War', *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 4 (2005): 511–26.

Interestingly, these victims' narratives showed that victim-centered dealing with the past is related to their historical awareness. Unlike a needs-based approach to victim-centeredness, which focuses on victims' aspirations and healing,[536] these victims showed that their original motivation for the central role is to correct historical records so that their victimization and suffering can be remembered. Moreover, in so doing, they do not aim for a retributive sense of dealing with the past, but aim to build a constructive form of society based on their morality. These victims proved that if reconciliation is a goal and a process, it needs to be a victim-friendly process so that partial historical memory and narrative can be corrected by their voices.

Shared memory and narratives build reconciliation

Participants also claimed that reconciliation must be built upon shared memories and narratives of the past. The present social division that challenges the vision of reconciliation is rooted in divided memories, narratives, and interpretations of contemporary historical events such as the colonial regime, independence, the Korean War, and autocratic regimes over the past few decades. These segregate people's historical identity, which has developed into political strife in the present. Therefore, reconciliation is a critical value that aims for social integration. For the victims, reconciliation so pursued is a matter of building a shared memory and narrative. When social groups have a shared memory and narrative of the past, reconciliation takes place, remedying long-standing social divisions. This point of view was articulated in line with the expansion of historical memory and narrative. Having a shared view on the past means knowing what victims have experienced and how they are remembered.

> I understand why people talk about 'reconciliation, reconciliation'. Well, I admit its value, especially, concerning today's political situation. We hear too many issues from TV and newspapers (…) But, we must know this fact: that the present social conflict actually… [*lowering voice*] comes from the war. (…) I am not an expert on history, but reconciliation, if it is to be genuine, needs to know what has happened in the past. Otherwise, it is very unlikely.
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

[536] Robins, 'Challenging the Therapeutic Ethic'; Robins, 'Failing Victims? The Limits of Transitional Justice in Addressing the Needs of Victims of Violations'; Robins, 'Towards Victim-Centred Transitional Justice'.

> As I said earlier, if we rightly look back on history, reconciliation comes for sure. It is what we victims all want. But it is unlikely until our voices are heard and remembered. (…) Eventually, this society will become heathier because history is equally approached by both sides.
>
> (Yoon Ho-Sang)

> I don't necessarily oppose the idea of reconciliation. When the TRC was in action, I thought about what it is. To be honest, some years back, I wondered if this was an accurate term for this situation. But, erm, now I feel like, we need that. This society needs reconciliation technically. (…) That is why I say that victims' experience must be remembered.
>
> (Jung Man-Ho)

Moreover, victims thought that shared memories and narrative prevent the same route of violence and wars. They deter another possibility of political violence and preserve a peaceful society for future generations. This aspect reflects that reconciliation, as some scholars have noted, can deter further repetition of the same violence by reconciling the disrupted relations between social and political groups, preserving a peaceful coexistence.[537] In this regard, these respondents realized the necessity of peace and historical education. They think that the only way to have shared memory and narratives is through education, that their stories can be an effective device for the educational activities. For them, reconciliation is at a stalemate because the historical records and public education do not teach about the dark side of history. Political violence in history is not remembered, and it is repeated today because the culture of violence is still present.[538] Reconciliation can function as a deterrence when violent events are remembered and taught. Moreover, as current education about history is deeply influenced by anti-communism and exclusive nation-building narratives, transforming the traditional narratives through peace and historical education is the core practice for reconciliation.

> The last word that I would like to say is about the importance of education. I mean historical education. Erm, several years ago, I gave a public lecture to university students. I was talking about my life story for about an hour and a half. But I was astonished that the students couldn't ask a thing about the war. They didn't even… I

[537] Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*; Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*.
[538] Kim, *Politics of War*; Kim, *War and Society*.

> don't blame their ignorance. That's not their fault! I think, the perpetrators have distorted history and truth. I was very upset by this fact. Students have never heard of this kind of stories. I was very shocked, to be honest. (…) I hope my testimony is used to enlighten people. This story shows that evil and violence are everywhere. I don't want our descendants to live with an inherited hatred.
>
> (Lee Kai-Sung)

> Anti-communist education has justified and promoted the culture of killing. It allows the exclusion and killing of their opponents. It's absurd! In contrast, eco-peace education supports human ecology and the way of living together in conflict, for sure. This country and people are the slaves of the culture of killing. There will be no ideological dispute when we understand the differences, strictly speaking. You know? Peace and reconciliation start from this realization. So, educating people is the only way to do this. (…) If so, we will be able to embrace others, we will be able to give up hatred and grievance. A good society does not suppress diversity.
>
> (Choi Young-Sup)

These narratives shed light on the transformation of the conventional historical narratives by acknowledging the suppressed narratives. Education is the key element of this sort of reconciliation. Here, respondents realized that they could play a role as an effective educator. Their stories stand out against the conventional education that has taught false information in history and bias against communism and for those who have been victimized for their involvement; thus, they provide educational counternarratives to the official memory and historical narratives. Their realization of the need for education defends the importance of reconciliation as shared memory and narratives which can redress historical wrongs and correction of long-standing bias.

Reconciliation as the Cornerstone of Peace for the Korean Peninsula

The last implication for reconciliation provided by participants provided, associates with peace or peace processes in the Korean Peninsula. That is to say, establishing reconciliation within South Korea may function as a driving force for peace in the relationship between two Koreas. When victims claimed that South Korean historical narratives ought to be transformed, in order to

recognize the evil side of history and to include their lives of suffering, they understood that acknowledging their status as communists will not only alarm the society because the government has committed wrongdoings against its civilians in the name of democratic nation building. It will also raises people' awareness, bringing them to a neutral ground of national history and ideological conflict. While giving this explanation, victims linked reconciliation to building peace in the Korean Peninsula.

Following these victim's explanations, the ever-present conflict within South Korea and between North and South Korea can be traced back to the Korean war and even before, when foreign powers ruled the peninsula for their own interests, and divided the Korean people into two groups. Conflict within South Korea is a microcosm of the conflict between South and North Korea, which was initially triggered by the ideological dispute. Within South Korean society, those civilians who sympathized with the North Korean Army were killed in the name of anti-communism, and were suppressed. The continued polity in South Korea reproduced this image of society, by thoroughly suppressing and excluding communists from state- formation. Thus, reconciling between perpetrator and victim groups within South Korea may lead Korean people as one entity to a peaceful state.

Victims think that the fact that they were living as second-class citizens in South Korea can firstly engender social bias towards them. If this occurs, reconciliation may bring peace in the peninsula because South Korean society would have a better understanding of history, human geography, and its ideological enemies. This approach to reconciliation is rooted in their identity as Koreans and nationalism, combining the Korean ethnicity as innocent victims suffering from foreign powers ever since Japanese colonialism. In this way, reconciliation can be the cornerstone of peace for the Korean Peninsula.

Figure 6.3. Victims' Perspective on Chain of Reconciliation in Korea

Victims mostly provided this vision of reconciliation at the end of their narratives. Although they did not directly discuss the detailed meaning of reconciliation, their narratives imply that they acknowledge reconciliation as the vision of peace in Korea.

> People who forget their history repeat the same today. I want to take this moment to emphasize that we need to reflect on the bitterness of the Korean War. The war is at present. It has not fully ended. The armistices must be ended. We Koreans can do this autonomously. As early as possible, we need to accomplish reconciliation, and therefore, peace in the peninsula may come! We will walk on the path to peace!
>
> (Lee Kai-Sung)

> See? This situation originally came from the war, that hasn't finished yet. What does it mean historically? It is connected to the war. It means that reconciling is a small step to finishing the war. Do you know what I mean?
>
> (Lee Se-Chan)

> To conclude, I support peace. I refuse anything if it opposes peace. I am fed up with

> living in this way. I really hope for peace to come. I truly mean it. To do so, we need to see reconciliation happening when I am still alive. I also want to see reunification. I dream about it every night. How joyful! (…) Reconciliation and peace may come together. The relationship between North and South is the same. So, we have to do what we have to do today.
>
> (Choi Young-Sup)

> You know, it is not only about us. It is more about this country as a whole. I mean, Korean people, the Korean nation, regardless of North and South. Um, think about it. What kinds of outcomes would reconciliation bring about? I think, there must be some concomitant effects. It is not just victims in this society, but collective reflection. It may do something for peace in the Korean Peninsula.
>
> (Jung Man-Ho)

This aspect of reconciliation reflects victims' pursuit of unity of divided Korean ethnicity, which does not differentiate North and South Korean. Instead, it underlines the restoration of Korean people as one unity, suffering from and victimized by foreign affairs. This implies that victims of civilians massacres are in line with the nationalist understanding of history, that proclaims the unity of the peninsula. In this position, they do not just focus on the narrower sense of reconciliation merely between victims and perpetrators and within South Korean political groups, but envisage a broader vision of unification in the sense of reconciling the painful history in the peninsula. This holistic approach to reconciliation was told on the basis of their awareness of history and their national identity.

Summary of the Analysis

This part of the analysis has highlighted particular themes of some victims' autobiographical narratives as a historical reference, as well as counternarratives under the umbrella theme of the expansion of historical memory and narratives. These victims, rooted in national identity and historical mind, have developed their stories centering around Korean nationalist narratives. They also addressed a high level of pride as Koreans while telling their life experience as victims during and after the civilian massacres. Importantly, in narrating their lives of suffering, they drew attention to partial historical memory and narratives. This type of narrative showed that they

realize that they are historical subjects that positively interpret national history based on life experiences, and advocate their central role in it. Moreover, they described themselves as moral agents, who refined their moral behaviors towards their enemies to appeal to a mature society that respects the dignity of living beings and human rights.

In these victims' narratives, three implications of reconciliation were found. First, participants argued that reconciliation redresses historical wrongs. To redress these wrongs, victims need to be at the center of dealing with the past because they can tell what they have experienced. It is a process of listening to their voices and of including them in the conventional memory and narratives of the past. Second, reconciliation comes when society has shared memory and narratives. Historical and peace education play a critical role in providing a different historical experience. Victims testified that their stories may have an educational function to transform the conventional narratives. Third, reconciliation so perceived is closely linked to a vision of Korean unification. Because the conflict between North and South Korea originated in an ideological conflict in the context of the Cold War, achieving reconciliation is a practice of removing bias towards those victims who were killed because of their involvement with communists and sympathizers within South Korea. Reconciliation may develop people's objective awareness of the past. Participants, at this point, defended reconciliation both socially as well as from an ethnic dimension.

6.4 Synthesis and Reflections on the Findings

This chapter illustrated the narrative processing of those participants who drew on their national identity in explaining how they depict themselves in the presence of life suffering and develop meaning of reconciliation, by means of the narrative genre of personal stories. By investigating their emplotment of identity-based autobiographical narratives, I attempted to provide a nuanced approach to victims' internal mechanism to generate reasons for espousing reconciliation. The chapter also contributes to social structures in deeply divided or post-conflict societies struggling with legacies of past political wrongs, and with a significant lack of governmental or institutional support for victims who live with daily trauma. As part of these research purposes, the findings in this chapter have presented some implications for the research questions via an in-depth narrative analysis. In this section, I reflect on these findings and synthesize them to respond to the research questions.

Individual autobiography is a representation of personal experience in a particular time and space. Authors compose their storylines with regard to what they have gone through in a specific context,

by which they make sense of and pursue a deeper meaning in their lives. History provides a fundamental narrative source for individuals by which to do so. Personal stories are viewed as part of the broader historical context, and individuals can seek meaning in their lives in considering historical conditions. Individuals as historical agents attempt to make their stories compatible with history, and in doing so, they associate their stories with historical narratives.

Some respondents amongst eighteen manifested this aspect of autobiography. While developing emplotment in a historical context, these victims explicitly addressed national identity. Their autobiographical narratives were thus motivated by their national identity as Koreans rooted in their historical mind. When personal stories were told within historical contexts, they constantly interpreted why the events happened and how they ought to be understood in their historical perspective. These victims showed a high level of historical understanding. In doing so, they developed their stories as counternarratives to traditional historical memory and narratives. These structural features supported victims' intentions in telling and writing their stories: the expansion of historical memory. Throughout the narratives, these respondents expressed Korean identity as a form of nationalism, on the one hand, and victim identity on the other. Expressions of nationalism are the outcome of a combination of a historical awareness and national identity. Because participants understand that the Korean War was caused by an ideological dispute between Korean people who were divided during the Japanese colonial regime and the military regime after independence, both North and South Koreans are victims of foreign powers. This understanding often appeared in their stories, motivating the adoption of nationalist narratives, as well as the development of their pride as Koreans. While asserting their national identity, however, they also addressed their social experience as victims in its historical context, showing that victims described their victimhood and suffering as a socio-historical experience. Despite that, collective victimhood is individualized in their personal narratives, and victims declare that they are loyal to the nation. In this regard, victims often showed their position between being totally Korean and as victims. This ambivalence shed light on their self-recognition. Victims portrayed the fact that they are historical subjects who had witnessed historical injustice and social discrimination in their daily lives and moral agents who nonetheless adopt moral attitudes towards their enemies and at the same time aspire to a morally mature society. This narrative processing is their aspiration for an inclusive historical memory, and for narratives that recognize their suffering as ordinary citizens. The meaning of reconciliation was generated in this complex narrative processing. For them, reconciliation is a critical social instrument to transform the ongoing social conflict in South Korea. In their understanding, the social conflict arises from a divided historical memory and interpretation; having shared memory and interpretation is reconciliation, and victims can play an important role in this by sharing their stories. They argue

for victim-centered dealing with the past, leading to reconciliation. Furthermore, reconciliation not only addresses the social conflict within South Korea, but also peace in the peninsula. This perspective of reconciliation is related to their historical awareness that Korea was once one nation and needs to be eventually reunified. Achieving social reconciliation in South Korea may bring about peace between North and South Korea.

There may be two more points that require proper academic attention for further researches. First, Korean nationalism that these victims proudly expressed can be contested in society. That is to say, while victims addressed that they are in line with nationalist narratives and an orthodox interpretation of history, the meaning of nationalism in today's South Korean society varies according to political groups, depending on how they understand contemporary Korean history. It is deeply related to Korea's identity politics between left- and right-wing political groups, which originated from the ethnic issue of persecuting those who collaborated with the Japanese ruling system and fought against the Korean independence movement during the colonial era.[539] In the identity-prone political situation in South Korea, victims' perspectives on the issue of reconciliation, despite their reliance on a nationalist interpretation, also bring about objections from the right-wing political groups. This realization reflects a significant challenge for achieving social integration in the presence of identity pluralism, leading to interpretative collision. However, as this study aimed to address victims' perspective, this issue needs to be examined further in others research.

Second, gender roles in society make a difference. Respondents, whose narratives were analyzed in this chapter, shared a high level of historical awareness motivating their narratives, by which the authors have a historical mind and interpretation in composing their personal stories in a historical setting. With their historical awareness, participants develop their stories compatible to be with historical witness and thus generate meanings of reconciliation. However, this study revealed that those victims who tended to provide historical interpretation and national identity as the motivation of their stories were all male participants. Female participants hardly addressed this aspect in their autobiographies. Although they expressed that they are Korean, this minimally impacted on their stories and further meaning-making. Only male participants positively showed their knowledge of history. Indeed, most female participants in this study took a passive position, expressing that only men know exactly what happened in the past. It seems to be related to the gender roles in Korean society. Korean society has been a male-dominated society, in which females have hardly been involved in political action and historical interpretation. As the participants of this study are old, the traditional gender roles affected their understanding of

[539] The legacies of Japanese colonialism shape the present political identity.

history. The participants in this study were greatly influenced by this social structure. This results in male participants developing their autobiographies in line with historical awareness, whereas the female respondents tended to do so with familial and religious concerns, as shall be reported in the following two chapters.

6.5 Summary

This chapter reported narrative analyses of victims' personal stories that focus on their life experiences during and after civilian massacres that took place during the Korean War. This chapter investigated some participants' stories, in which their national identity features in the narrative structure and themes. By analyzing these victims' narratives, I first aimed to understand how victims of political violence understand the world around them in the aftermath of the violence and develop and portray self-images in the process of recounting. Second, I intended to study subjective meanings of reconciliation as a socially required value.

These victims' narratives had a common form: autobiography as historical witness. In telling and writing individual experience as victims in historical time and space, victims do not homogeneously illustrate their stories in the historical context, but develop them as counternarratives to conventional historical memory and narratives. The central theme of their stories, the expansion of historical memory and narratives, can be understood in this light; official memory does not properly acknowledge their life experiences as victims. Throughout the narratives, participants addressed their national identity as Koreans in concert with nationalism. Although they expressed collective victimhood, they did not restrict themselves to victim identity, but aspired to be recognized as ordinary citizens in society. In narrating in this way, victims described themselves as historical subjects and moral agents. They were oriented to defend their desire to expand historical memory and narratives. Reconciliation was thought of in this process, underlying its historical and national function.

Chapter 7
The Pursuit of Family Reconstruction

> I thought to rebuild the shattered family. If I may, I would call it restoration? A family restoration? That sort of feeling was very strong. On the other hand, I appreciated that my brother fathered two sons. Would it be appropriate to say carrying on a family line? I, as the head of the family, wanted to show them who we are and rebuild our family deconstructed through them.
>
> - Participant, Jung Seok-Hee

> The last thing that I want to tell you is that, as you can see, I have strong pride in my ancestors. I always admire them. My wrongdoings would disgrace their reputations. It's as if my fault becomes theirs. I remember my grandfather taught me not to covet others or adopt any forms of violence. I haven't done any kinds of misdeed or deviant behaviors so far on account of his teaching in my youth. I didn't do so for the memory of my grandfather. In retrospect, these memories control my behaviors. Their words are the guidance of my life.
>
> - Participant, Kim Jang-Ho

This chapter reports victim's autobiographical narrative meaning which is motivated by family identity. Some of the eighteen participants showed paradigmatic examples of family-oriented autobiographical narratives and meaning-making in composing personal storylines. These participants' narratives present their desire for family reconstruction as the critical source of understanding of the self, suffering, and provision for reconciliation. This chapter is reports of these victims' autobiographical reasoning.

As in the previous chapter, this chapter comprises two types of narrative analyses and reflection. In short, the structural analysis revealed that victims who had a strong family identity develop their life stories as part of their family story. The stories center around what has happened to the family and how it has suffered during and after civilian massacres. Symbolic family events and values come to the fore in this form of storyline, playing a critical role in making sense of how victims live through life challenges. Through narrating personal stories in this structured way, victims addressed their desire for family reconstruction and appraised the meaning of

reconciliation. Thematic analysis showed that victims develop their stories with a root theme, resilient family restoration. This core theme is evident in victims' familial mindsets, and self-recognition. Concerns for familial rules, roles, and boundaries support their reasoning of who they are and what they ought to do for the shattered family. Based on this narrative ground, victims animated some meanings of reconciliation.

7.1 Understanding Family Identity in Autobiographical Narratives

In Chapter 5, I gave an overview of previous literature on how family identity motivates victims' narrative processing of meaning-making. Scholars understand tgat family, a fundamental identity provider, is a critical source of autobiographical memory, storytelling, and meaning-making. Familial interaction influences the self's memory, and by this, the self composes autobiography intertwined with family narratives. In the process of recounting what has happened to their families, individuals assess and reassess the self-concept, reflect on the family culture and values, and adopt moral messages according to the family.

From this point of view, individuals who affirm their family identity and values as the primary concern and source for their ordinary lives make sense of their experience of suffering. Autobiography becomes then a family story, describing what has happened to the family and why the events took place. To overcome family ordeals, the autobiographical self focuses on who they are and what they ought to do for the family in a way that generates redemptive meaning as part of the family reconstruction. Amongst other theories, family system theory gives a clue as to how individuals develop meaning-making while composing family-oriented personal narratives in the presence of traumatic events. The theory explains that individuals develop meaning with regard to family roles, rules, and boundaries. By concerning familial roles, rules, and boundaries, individuals attempt to make the deconstructed family more resilient.

This type of narrative processing was shared among some participants' autobiographies. These respondent's orientation and motivation of meaning-making were highly embedded in their family identity, and it influenced the whole narrative structure and themes. It needs to be acknowledged that other participants also showed the family-oriented narratives. However, their narratives did not represent the family sort of autobiography because the overall narrative themes were not aligned primarily with the family identity but others: national identity and religious identity. Meanwhile, those victims with family identity tried to keep structural and thematic coherence along with who they are and what they ought to do within the family boundary. Thus, this chapter analyses those participants' autobiographies in order to elaborate

victims' subjective perspective on reconciliation in concert with family identity.

7.2 Investigating Narrative Structure

This section presents the structural investigation. By analyzing the organization of stories, characters, and events, which play an important role in composing their life stories, it underlines how participants addressed their family identity, and why this identity promotes the process of recounting participants' life experiences. Through structural analysis of the narratives of those victims who constitute their autobiography based on their family identity, I can effectively present themes emerging from the texts in accordance with the research questions.

Three structural features emerged from the data. First, participants in this set of analysis developed their autobiography as part of broader family story. Second, in doing so, they tended to describe some key family events as a symbol of family reconstruction. Third, family values were often mentioned as a behavioral principle.

Autobiographical Stories as Part of Family Story

The most common structural feature is that victims tended to compose their autobiographical stories as part of family stories. Victims are family storytellers, describing what happened to their family, how they have survived, and who played certain roles in place of the deceased. Although the authors of the stories are victims, the emplotment was generally constructed and developed in conjunction with family experience during and after civilian massacres.

To build a family-oriented personal story, victims first introduced their family background: not only their family lineage but also how they have been victimized opened the family story. In recounting their backgrounds, they affirmed that what has happened in the past was not just an accident, but was a systematic demolition or extermination of their families conducted by the state power and associated agencies. Although their families were nationalists, loyal, prosperous, and educated, they were victimized and shattered by the binary ideology because their family members either engaged with communism or were suspected communists. Personal stories follow thereafter, but these are narrated in a way to support the family story. In telling their stories in this way, victims realized their roles in the family deconstruction. Self-realization in the stories is narrated in a way that expresses their pursuit of family reconstruction. This narrative structure leads victims to generate meaning of reconciliation, and it emerged in relation to their familial

rules, roles, and boundaries (see Figure 7.1.).

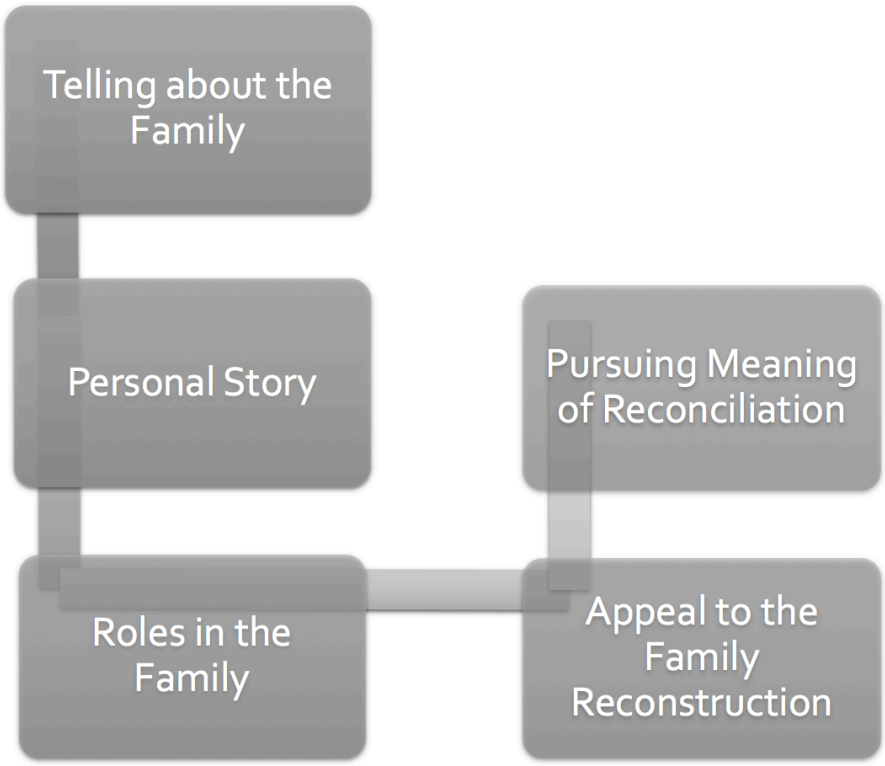

Figure 7.1. Narrative Structure and the Emergence of Meaning 2

A participant, Ki No-Jung's story presents this feature of narrative structure. Although he cried throughout the interview from the emotion of bereavement, he represented the typical example of the familial style of storytelling, as shown below.

#1

> Before telling my story, I have to say this first. Historically, the Ki clan was one of the noble families in the Joseon Dynasty. Well… you can hardly find people whose family name is Ki these days, but we, the Ki people, played a critical role in politics in the period [*proudly spoken*]. I go to ancestral rites and meet people from our family clan every year. The Ki people's genealogy is long, although our ancestors were ruined and killed for committing treason. In the War, eleven members of my direct family were killed [*sobbing*].

#2

Since the event, I was extremely lonely when I was in elementary school. I had no friends. Only me myself. I stayed at home all day long. And, because I didn't have parents as others did, I was totally discouraged at school… I am bright now, but was depressed and could not focus on study properly at that time. I have been living like this, like silently. It is unspeakable and indescribable… [*sobbing*]… I cry whenever I tell my story.

#3

Eleven members died in my family. It was extermination. How can I understand this? Would you have been able to accept this? I am the only male survivor in my family. My father and uncles were all killed. I am the only survivor. I became the head of my family from an early age. (…) As a matter of fact, I have tried so hard to live morally. I tried harder than others. I did so in order not to let those who killed my father look down on my family.

#4

Um… as I said, I myself wanted to revenge the guy who accused my family members. If I was living alone, I would have harmed him. But I didn't do so for my family, especially for my grandmother, who survived. You cannot imagine how much I had wished to kill my enemy in those days. The main reason I didn't do so was that I was living for the purpose of restoring my family destroyed in the war. For my whole family, except my grandmother and I, was killed by the tragedy, I couldn't act rashly. That was the reason.

#5

Reconciliation and peace are important things to think about for this society. Um… I don't really know what to say… but, what I can say is that reconciliation and peace cannot come without the assurance of no wars. We can think of them only when we are assured that there will be no wars and violence towards civilians. If a war breaks out in the future, sorrows and wounds will be much greater than I and my family experienced… Our children and descendants must not experience this tragedy again.

As seen from Ki's abridged story, his concern for his family forms his emplotment. He started his storytelling by stating his pride in the Ki clan and its history. Although the explanation is rather

short, his tone was excited. However, the family introduction was to complain about his tragic story of his family that was once noble and respected but was utterly demolished by the unjust mass killing. His personal story then followed. Despite a rather simple description, he explained that he was living an extremely lonely life. He then explained who he is in the family and what roles he has been playing in the family. He expressed that he was not convinced to take revenge on his enemy because he lived only for the aim of family reconstruction. This narrative process allowed him to reminisce about his family's suffering. At the end of his storytelling, he provided a generative meaning for the future generation.

To sum up, the emplotment of the participants showed that they tend to develop family-oriented storylines. This style of autobiographical narrative is arguably based on their family identity, which is coherently maintained by the authors throughout the recounting process. Looking at the narrative structure, victims' pursuit of family reconstruction governs the way they remembered stories of the violent event and continued suffering. They described what happened to their family and how they were shattered by different kinds of pain and discrimination. However, family suffering and destruction are evaluated by how they see who they and their families are and how their family must be reinstated. As will be detailed in the thematic analysis, this structure supports victims to express family mindset and to perceive their self-image. Moreover, the family-centered formulation of autobiographical narratives led victims to fathom and appraise what reconciliation ought to mean for family reconstruction.

Symbolic Family Events

Another structural feature is that victims told of symbolic family events. They described the events as if they are at the center of the family and play a constructive role. By telling symbolic events at the peak of storytelling, victims hoped to reconstruct the shattered family in a symbolic way. For example, three participants described the building of a family grave for the deceased as a symbolic event to reconstruct the shattered family. Building a family grave is a Korean tradition whereby descendants collect ancestors' remains and bury them in the same place, enshrine them by remembering, and maintain their familial identity. For victims, it was not just a cultural practice but a meaningful endeavour to preserve the image of their once shattered yet reconstructed family. The three participants spoke of this event proudly. They affirmed that their families were loyal and respected but destroyed for the unjust state-sponsored political violence during the war. They also explained why building a family grave is a symbol of family reconstruction, clarifying what family they are and that they ought to be remembered.

By the way, I have to tell you a story about the family grave. In 2015, I received some money from the state in the name of compensation. It was actually not much, considering the death of my father and how I have lived thus far. But I was able to build a family grave with that money. Well, other victims didn't spend the money in this way, but I did. (…) What I wanted to tell the world by building the grave was this. My father and my grandfather were unjustly killed, although they were the most respected people in the village. These great people from a great family were killed! I wanted to tell this to the world. So, I also erected a little gravestone in front of my father's tomb, inscribing this story.

(Yoon Jung-Hee)

I... made the family gravestone at the National Cemetery in Daejeon. I collected all the family records, from those who participated in the independence movement to people of national merit in the Joseon dynasty. But, more importantly, I did so to not forget my father's death and to let people know about my family story. It is very meaningful.

(Kim Jang-Ho)

After my brother died and I became the head of my family, and I don't know, I suddenly wanted to make a family grave as if I had always wanted to. I gathered dispersed tombs together into a new space. I did this job in 2002. At that time, I was already retired. I collected eleven family tombs dispersed here and there, and brought each buried corpse to my family gravesite. You know, I paid attention to other countries' funeral cultures in order to play the role of head of the family when I went abroad for work. (…) So, I rearranged the family genealogy and made the family tombs, including great-great-grandparent, great-grandparent, grandparent, and parent.

(Jung Seok-Hee)

Jung Seok-Hee, in particular, explained the meaning of building the family grave, when I asked for more details. He said that he wanted to make their family story public in the village where their four family members were killed. By inviting the villagers each year, he conducted a memorial service to remember their unjust deaths. For him, this was an act of raising public awareness. More importantly, he stated that his act of building a family grave is a sign of his willingness to restore his family, which is the core theme of his story.

Another example of symbolic family events is family rituals. As a source of family identity or sense of belonging, family rituals are habitual forms of family behaviors, binding family members emotionally.[540] Rituals are critical in family life. Individuals realize who they are in the family by describing these rituals in their autobiography.[541] Some victims in this study confirmed that they have maintained some family rituals after they came to know the truth of the deceased. For victims, ritualistic behaviors were natural and intended attitudes, longing for the family well-being. For example, Cho Hye-Ja said she participates in an annual ceremony in a Buddhist temple for her personal desire for family well-being. For her, the annual ceremony was regarded as a family ritual.

> I go to a Buddhist temple a few times a year. What I do in the temple is to enshrine my ancestors who unjustly died. I carved their names in the temple's memorial stone, and whenever I go, I bow down in front of the stone. That is not all. In another temple, I carved my children's names. Because they must live. I wished for their well-being. I do this a few times a year.

She provided some meaning of her ritualistic behaviors. She said these rituals make her feel relieved as she believes that the deceased can be released from anguish and feel comfortable when she enshrines their names and bows to them. In turn, they bless and guard her children. In her mind, this ritual is a symbol of family well-being. Other respondents said that they performed ancestral rites for the deceased. Other participants also provided a similar story. Shin Soon-Ran and Jeon Mi-Kyung told of their participation in memorial services every year. They go to services with a ritualistic mind. For them, the services are not just for remembrance but have more to do with her hope for their family's well-being. In these rituals, the remaining family members remember the victimization their families suffered on the one hand and renew their minds for the betterment of the current family situation on the other.

> I have been visiting ceremonial events every year. There, I can see and meet other victims. But the real reason I go to is because I, erm, want to remember my brother with other people. There, I can think and talk about him as much as I want. That moment is very meaningful to me.

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[540] James H. S. Bossard and Eleanor R. Boll, *Ritual in Family Living: A Contemporary Study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Kathleen M. Galvin, 'Diversity's Impact on Defining the Family: Discourse-Dependence and Identity', in *The Family Communication Sourcebook*, ed. Lynn H. Turner and Richard West (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2006), 3–20.
[541] Bossard and Boll, *Ritual in Family Living*.

(Shin Soon-Ran)

> In memorial services, I read my poems. People start crying as I read as they have same story. I am just reading my story like a ritual, and thankfully it sooths other' people. Whenever I attend those rituals, I also yearn for my family's well-being, especially for my children. What can I wish more? My whole family was shattered, and I only got my daughter and son. Yes, what I can do is praying for them.

(Jeon Mi-Kyung)

Symbolic events were critical to understand how victims of civilian massacres manage their mind under the circumstances of their shattered family. The events were described when victims tried to make sense of why the traumatic event happened to their family and to reclaim the sense of family identity. That is, symbolic events reflect victims' visionary scheme of the family reconstruction. By telling those events, victims articulated where their families are going and what their roles are in the family. Moreover, participants wanted to express that their families are still present and they have to take their responsibilities.

Addressing Family Values as a Behavioral Principle

The third feature of narrative structure is that victims deliberately expressed their family values. In telling family stories, they declared their family values at the beginning and end of their stories, as if the values were direct implications of who they are and how moral their families are. They also demonstrated that their behaviors are determined by the family values as rules that they need to follow. In particular, victims showed absolute respect for their remembered ancestors' teaching. They said that their actions are grounded in what their ancestors said to them and what they would do if they were alive. The words of their ancestors and the deceased governed the behavioral rules. For example, participants spoke of the value of no retribution toward their enemies. They responded that not conducting wrong deeds is one of their family rules, formerly avowed by family members.

> When my grandfather was still alive, he gave me moral teaching every day. (…) Without his words, I am sure I would have done something bad to the person who killed my father. Whenever I desire revengeful acts, I come up with what he said to me. It is very mysterious. I… I sometimes deliver his words to my children because I

> don't want them to repeat the same feeling as mine.
>
> (Jeon Mi-Kyung)

> What I kept remembering was my father's and grandfather's behaviors that they showed me when they were still alive. I've been motivated by what they had done in the village. I had great respect for them.
>
> (Kim Jang-Ho)

> My brother would not like it if I kept up a negative emotion continuously. I remember who he is and act in the way that he would recommend to me. I have never done bad things to those who accused my brother and my family.
>
> (Shin Soon-Ran)

Participants repeated such family values throughout their storytelling. Importantly, family values, as will be addressed, seemed a powerful reference for those victims who hold a strong family identity when they reflected on the meaning of individual life and how to behave in everyday life. This motivational source was related to their narrative processing of reconciliation. Thus, while symbolic events present victims' hope for the reconstruction, family values guide them to the manner of it.

Summary of the Analysis

The structural investigation of some participants' autobiographical narratives presented several features of their narrative structure. First, victims who had a strong family identity make their personal stories as part of the family story. Their personal stories cannot be separated from what their family as a whole has experienced, or from the outcome of civilian massacres and further victimization of their family. The overall flow of the storylines indicate that they are telling their family stories. In this form of family-centered narrative structure, victims addressed their desire for family reconstruction. Second, victims narrated essential family events as a symbol of repair. These stories are told as critical components of the family story, and at the same time, as the direct expression of their pursuit of family restoration and well-being. Last, family values become apparent in their stories. Ancestors' wisdom emerged as a powerful source of their behavior; victims described that their behavior is rooted in those words.

What is distinctive from the narrative structure is that participants keep emphasizing their familial roles as a response to family reconstruction after violence. By putting symbolic familial events and ethics at the center of their stories, they construct the family stories in a way to confirm that they are the navigator of the shattered family. It demonstrates a development of the familial self who undertakes duties and responsibilities to restore the family or at least to make it resilient from the collapse. These structural features shed light on victims' particular mindset and self-images in association with family roles, rules and boundaries. As will be discussed in the following section, the core theme emerging from their narratives was deployed within these structures. As a result, some meanings for reconciliation were created in these characteristics of victims' narratives.

7.3 Investigating Narrative Themes

This section reports the thematic form of analysis. As mentioned in the previous chapter, thematic analysis in this study focuses on how individual victims understand their life and the world around them, recognize themselves in the middle of suffering, and thereby deriving some meaning of reconciliation. In Chapter 5, I theorized that the pursuit of family reconstruction could formulate victims' autobiographical meaning-making in such a way as to provide them with family identity and subjective authorship in developing meaning from their life experiences with regard to family rules, roles, and boundaries. In the structural analysis, I presented how victims' narrative structures demonstrate their pursuit of family reconstruction with symbolic family events and values. Correspondingly, the thematic analysis has also revealed that the victims' autobiographical narratives, to varying extents, share a root theme, which could be labelled 'resilient family restoration'. Their detailed stories are categorized by the core theme.

Resilient family restoration, as a founding narrative theme, represents the way victims particularize their pursuit of family reconstruction. In some literature, the term 'resilient family' or 'family resilience' is understood as one's attempt to restore the function of the family shattered by adverse and traumatic events. Scholars in family resilience studies propose the term as a restorative framework to cause the family to function in the right way. For example, Walsh understands that family resilience is an adaptational process, and is the ability of the family as a functional system to withstand and rebound from family crisis, disruption, and suffering.[542] As an adaptational process, it includes an active process of endurance, restoration of self-esteem, and

[542] Froma Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*, Third (New York; London: The Guilford Press, 2016); Froma Walsh, 'Family Resilience: A Framework for Clinical Practice', *Family Process* 42, no. 1 (2003): 1–18.

growth responses to crises and challenges.[543] McCubbin and McCubbin also state that family resilience is "the positive behavioral patterns and functional competence individuals and the family unit demonstrate under stressful or adverse circumstances, which undermine the family's ability to recover by maintaining its integrity as a unit while insuring, and where necessary, restoring, the well-being of family members and the family unit as a whole."[544] From these points of view, a resilient family aims at family restoration not only through managing stressful events by 'bouncing back', but also through attempts to achieve well-being in life.[545] In the words of Walsh, "resilience entails more than merely surviving, getting through, or escaping a harrowing ordeal… Resilience processes enable people to heal from painful experiences, take charge of their lives, and go on to live and love well."[546]

Resilient family restoration can be understood in the light of Korean familism. Familism refers to 'a form of social organization in which all values are determined by reference to the maintenance, continuity, and functions of family group.'[547] It is one of the most distinctive characteristics of Asian culture, widely embedded in the lifestyles, regardless of religion, traditional customs, and dominant philosophy.[548] Importantly, the family in Korean society functions as a critical source of identity for individuals. Korean familism originates from family-centered identity, by which Koreans expand their sense of selfhood in the social sphere.[549] As Kim noted, familism is the fundamental resource for social behaviors in both rural and urban communities for Korean people.[550] Family is a critical sociocultural element for individuals to develop their identity and to determine social class. Thus, familism for Koreans is at the center of their personal and social lives. In this understanding, the resilient image of family restoration presented a strong sense of belonging to their family lineage, class, values, and traditions.

Viewed from these aspects of family resilience, the participants composed their stories, regarding a desire to restore the destroyed family, as a result of civilian massacres and following victimization that completely shattered their family members and disabled familial lineage and functions. While recounting, they told why and how the traumatic events happened to their families, what the family can be, and who they are in the deconstructed family with an envisaged scheme of the resilient family as restoration. The narrative processing develops the family-

[543] Ibid.
[544] Cited in William C. Nichols, 'Roads to Understanding Family Resilience: 1920s to the Twenty-First Century', in *Handbook of Family Resilience*, ed. Dorothy S. Becvar (New York: Springer, 2013), 3–16.
[545] Boss Pauline, *Loss, Trauma, and Resilience: Therapeutic Work with Ambiguous Loss.* (New York: Norton, 2006).
[546] Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*.
[547] Kulp, 1996, cited in Dongno Kim, 'The Transformation of Familism in Modern Korean Society: From Cooperation to Competition', *International Sociology* 5, no. 4 (1990): 409–25.
[548] Yoon-Sun Choi et al., 'Culture and Family Process: Measures of Familism for Filipino and Korean American Parents', *Family Process* 57, no. 4 (2018), 2.
[549] Kim, 'The Transformation of Familism in Modern Korean Society'.
[550] Ibid.

oriented meaning-making.[551] As mentioned above, meanings of reconciliation emerged in concert with victims' pursuit of family reconstruction, judging from their past experience, present situation, and hopes for the future of their family as a whole.

To enumerate the emerging themes, I divided them into three sequences. First, the core theme can be categorized with their familial mindset. As a springboard for family story, they expressed their pride in their family and family suffering as a result of the violent events. Victims then explained who they are and what they ought to be in the family, concerning different familial rules and roles. They portrayed themselves as head and messenger of the family who delivers family values and traditions to their descendants. These themes emerged and presented their family suffering under the foundational theme of family resilience as restoration. Meanings for reconciliation were generated concerning the desire and image of a resilient family.

Addressing Familial Mindset

The resilient sense of family restoration is expressed in victims' familial mindsets. Mindset, a belief that motivates behaviors, allows individuals to envisage the way they lead their lives and perceive the world around them.[552] Familial mindset can be understood as individuals' belief that the family is the fundamental reference point to shape their behaviors and by which they understand the world, with regard to the family. The participants addressed this family-oriented mindset in two ways: pride in their family and suffering of the family. Through expressing these two themes, victims showed the way that they wanted to restore their families. These themes are further linked to their self-conceptions.

Pride in the Family

The first narrative theme that motivates victims' narrative processing is their pride in the family. From the structural analysis, it is evident that the participants' autobiographical narratives began with their family background of the family-centered life story. This shows that these victims composed their life stories with a higher level of pride in the family than other victims. They expressed their pride in the family by reciting their family lineage and social status in modern Korean history. Although other participants in this study showed some degree of family identity

[551] Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience*; Fivush, *Family Narratives and the Development of an Autobiographical Self*.
[552] Carol S. Dweck, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (New York: Robinson, 2017).

and pride, their tones and attitudes when they talked about the family were not as distinctive as those who utilize family identity as the fundamental narrative provider. Their sense of belonging to the family came from their peculiar pride in the family, and distinguishes them from other families. That way, they call attention to what motivates them to act for family restoration.

Both Yoon Jung-Hee and Ki No-Jung explicitly showed their pride in the family by recounting their family lineage. They explained how noble and respected their ancestors were in the past. In Korean society, people are combined through their surnames which is developed into a family clan, and the family lineage is linked to the surname.[553] Both narrated this proudly.

> Before telling my story, I have to tell this first. Historically, the Ki clan was one of the noble families in the Joseon Dynasty. Well… you can hardly find people whose family name is Ki these days, but we, the Ki people, played a critical role in politics in the period [*spoken proudly*]. I go to ancestral rites and meet people from our family clan every year. The Ki people's genealogy is long although our ancestors were ruined and killed for committing treason. In the War, eleven members of my direct family were killed [*sobbing*].
>
> (Ki No-Jung)

> I was born in Non-san. My father was Yoon Yeo-Byung. We are the Yoon clan. The pa-pyung Yoon clan [*geographical surname name*]. We pa-pyung Yoon people are great people, very talented. There are a vast number of great people in my family lineage you know? (…) I remembered, my father and grandfather were very respected by other people, and I was even treated like a princess when my father was still alive.
>
> (Yoon Jung-Hee)

[553] Family clan/lineage is a particular feature of traditional and contemporary Korean society. It refers to a group of people who share the same paternal lineage, by which people live in the consanguineous villages. The clan comprises geographical name and surname, providing individuals with family identity and group affiliation. Hyun-Joo Yang, 'Family Clans and Public Good: Evidence from the New Village Beautification Project in South Korea', *Journal of Development Economics* 136 (2019): 34–50. The Korean clan system, influenced by Chinses kinship ideology with the spread of Neo-Confucianism, is distinctive from that of other countries in three aspects. As Shima pointed out, the system, first, is exclusively based on the principle of agnatic descent. Second, family genealogy includes a vast number of individuals reaching out to thirty generations and more of descendants. Third, the system is not restricted to a specific region, but instead integrates those individuals who belong to the family body on a national scale. The system is manifested in the form of the genealogical record and maintained by an organization of collective activities, called *munjung*. For the national body of the clan, the Korean clan system acknowledges its segmentation into a small scale of family and *munjung* such as ancestral rites, led by the agnate head of each family. Each family and *munjung* then are linked to a higher level of clan. Mutsuhito Shima, 'In Quest of Social Recognition: A Retrospective View on the Development of Korean Lineage Organization', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50, no. 1 (1990): 87–129.

Kim Jang-Ho stated the social class of his family proudly. Mentioning who their ancestors were and what they did in Korean history, Kim demonstrated the high quality of his family and himself throughout his story. Importantly, he explained why this great family had to be the object of state violence and suffer from the ideological dispute.

> Before talking about my father, I have to tell you that my family is a descendant of the independent movement activists. My great-grandfather was one of the activists… and he was, you know, he had a different motivation of the movement… When Rhee Syngman [*former president*] wanted to meet him, he refused to see him, excusing his rustic background. Because my great-grandfather worked in China when Rhee Syngman was in Hawaii, I think he thought Rhee and himself were in a different class or something. You know, at that time… people lived by their social class, right? Um… he used to be a governor of a city, Ok-Gua, in the North. Oh, my great-great-grandfather was a Hwang-Hae provincial governor. You see, there were many wonderful ancestors in my family.

He continued further to explain his family. He said that his grandfather and his father, both of whom were affected by their ancestors, were involved in educating people. At this point, he said, 'because my family is one of the loyal families, we were excluded'. In this way, he used this family explanation as a critical background of victimization. In his narratives, this mindset emerged coherently, comprising the beginning and ending of his stories.

> The last thing that I want to tell you is that, as you can see, I have a strong pride in my ancestors. I always admire them. My wrongdoings would disgrace their reputations. It's like my fault becomes theirs. I remember my grandfather taught me not to covet others and adopt any forms of violence. I haven't done any kinds of misdeed or deviant behaviors so far on account of his teaching in my youth. I didn't do so for the memory of my grandfather. In retrospect, these memories control my behaviors. Their words are the guidance of my life.

Others showed a relatively weaker pride in the family as a whole, but they still revealed a pride in the deceased By giving a detailed description of how they feel proud of the deceased in their story-telling, victims emphasized that they lost the breadwinner of the family. Of course, every victim in this study expressed a particular emotion towards the deceased. However, unlike others, those

victims who had great pride in their families centered their stories around the dominating emotion. Both Shin Soon-Ran's and Moon Yang-Ja's autobiography are full of their admiration for the deceased.

> My brother was the first grandson for my grandparents. He taught illiterate people the Korean language at night school. My brother was a warm and generous person to me. I always admired him. Wherever he went, I followed him. He was 26 years old young when he was first arrested by the police. He did nothing wrong. (…) Because he was my role model as well as the breadwinner of my family, the whole family were grieving for years. We all missed him so much while we were also under suppression after he had gone. I am still looking for him, my beloved brother. He is a fallen star… That was my brother. That was my brother.
>
> (Shin Soon-Ran)

> I was very proud of my father. You know, he was a reporter. Though he couldn't come home that often for his work and I was too young, I feel like I see my father sometimes.
>
> (Moon Yang-Ja)

These pride narratives appear at the forefront of the family stories. As a prologue, victims' descriptions of family pride characterized the overall storylines. Following this, they turned to describe the family suffering in-depth.

Suffering of the Family

The familial mindset of victims also appeared in the form of telling family suffering. Victims in this study commonly stated that civilian massacres and their legacies were a national project, aimed at disposing of communist or political opponents' and sympathizers' families in the process of state-building during the U.S. military regime and the Korean War. According to their memories, the state power deliberately killed the breadwinners who had to take care of other family members, so that the remaining family members were dispersed and experienced diverse forms of victimization. The respondents developed their stories centering around the family suffering rather than telling of their personal suffering. For them, civilian massacres brought their families, who were noble and of high social class, unforgettable pain and destruction. The death of one or

some family members had a negative impact on the surviving members; each of them continues to endure the emotional wounds and victimization together. In their narratives, expressions such as 'the family of communists' and 'survival of the family' showed their awareness of family suffering.

> In hindsight, what happened to me is not just my pain but my family's. When I was young, I was obsessed with myself and didn't understand how much my brother and mom had been suffering by the event, because I lived far from the village for my study. But, yes, we all suffered a lot.
>
> (Jung Seok-Hee)

> My family used to be highly respected by people, but were suddenly being pointed at. People who respected us started to call us the family of communists. Uh… since then, we had to keep silence. We have lived in this way until today.
>
> (Shin Soon-Ran)

> We are wholly destroyed. Nothing left. Only myself and my grandmother. That was all.
>
> (Ki No-Jung)

> What I can say is that noble families like us had a very tough time at that time. We were loyal to the country, but what we got was betrayal from people. Does it make sense?
>
> (Kim Jang-Ho)

> Why did we, the pa-pyung Yoon's family, have to be maltreated? (…) After my father died, my family was entirely scattered. I cannot tell you every detail, but there was no typical family life at all.
>
> (Yoon Jung-Hee)

Family suffering is social and historical rather than physical and psychological. Because their pain comes from historical wrongs and persists in the social structure, historical memory and social experience maintain the memories of family suffering. Thus, victimization is a historical event of the deconstruction of their family. They expressed this by juxtaposing the families of the rightists

and leftists and their opposing experiences in history. By comparing the family histories of these groups, they revealed their experiences of suffering and the unjust treatment of their family.

> After my father's death, my family was destroyed. I mean, my family were highly respected by villagers from the time of my great-grandfather for the independent movement. We had to be dislocated. We couldn't live there any longer! We left everything behind us. We should know this. The families of, so-called, leftists at that time suffered in this way. That is not all. Every member of my family came under surveillance until the 1990s. What about those who accused us? They are well off. They are remembered as heroes. What an absurd situation!
>
> (Kim Jang-Ho)

> My family is often called the family of communists. I was a little girl, so I didn't know what it meant to us. But, over time, I realized that it is such a dishonor. A dishonor for my family. How dare they call us the family of communists? If they knew where my family came from, they wouldn't keep calling us in that way.
>
> (Yoon Jung-Hee)

> We had to keep silence. My family hardly talked to each other for several years after my brother was arrested because we were intensely monitored by the police every day. What did my brother do? Once the surveillance was stopped, people looked at us differently already. We already become a different family within ourselves and in people's eyes. We were worn out. I think, my family were living like this until today; keeping silent, being excluded… Living as a member of the family of communists is my life.
>
> (Shin Soon-Ran)

> Their deaths are remembered and ours are forgotten. Does it make sense? Huh? I utterly oppose it. We all suffer from the war together!
>
> (Jeon Mi-Kyung)

Family suffering is then developed into a complaint about the nation and power. Because their suffering derives from the wrongful exercising of power and has continued within social structures, victims blamed the nation for their suffering. Unlike victims who hold a strong national

identity and resist blaming the nation, those who are embedded in family identity in telling their stories explicitly expressed their familial pains.

> To be honest, compensation? It's not even… [*pause*] it's not even compatible with the price of dog's bones! Why would we be treated with money? Who said we want the damn money? How dare the state pay us back in this way? This nation never knows and even wants to know our suffering.
>
> (Yoon Jung-Hee)

> All this would not have happened to us if governors managed their power more wisely. Killing people is not the right thing. The nation and the president have the right to protect its citizens, but they wronged them. How would they be redeemed for the sin? This is what I want to tell the whole country.
>
> (Ki No-Jung)

> I cannot tell you how my brother and I lived miserably. I [*crying*] cannot tell… My whole family is just broken. What do the politicians do? Why don't they do anything? They are taking seats, doing nothing!
>
> (Moon Yang-Ja)

Others expressed shame for the country.

> Those who had power killed their citizens, but do now apologize properly. You know, there is something wrong in this country. I don't know what, but... Look around the world. It is very embarrassing.
>
> (Jung Seok-Hee)

> In fact, I feel very shameful for this country, like, the way they deal with the past. This kind of event mustn't be forgotten. The suffering of a noble family like us is being forgotten. It is so disappointing that I feel deep shame.
>
> (Kim Jang-Ho)

> I simply don't understand how a normal country still does not properly deal with the past but keeps imposing suffering on us. It is a humiliation!

(Cho Hye-Ja)

> I deeply feel ashamed for this country. I feel like I am still not a member of this country.

(Jeon Mi-Kyung)

Nonetheless, victims tended to understate their family experience because they felt embarrassed when they described in detail how their family have lived. Instead, this familial sense of suffering shaped resistant statements and attitudes towards the state power. Through these attitudes, they wanted it acknowledged that while their families were noble and respected, they all suffered from the unjust killing.

In this way, victims addressed their familial mindsets, which consisted of the overall characteristics of their narratives. The narratives of pride and suffering reflected a shared belief that their families used to be respected but were demolished by unjust violence in the war. The violent event does not only refer to the killing of suspected individuals but the traumatic event of family destroyed. By remembering and producing such narratives, participants showed that they are the familial member who takes care of the family as the primary concern, and suffers together with other family members. Through the pride and suffering narratives, they made sense of the current situation of their family and justified that they need to be restored eventually. These narratives can be interpreted in light of Korean familism by which victims form their family identity and are determined to live for the restoration of the family. These are related to victims' self-recognition.

Self-Recognition: Who am I in the shattered family?

Victims' narration of their pride in and suffering for the family leads them to describe who they are. While recounting, victims constantly ask and respond to the question 'Who am I' within the family boundary. The 'I' is not an individual 'I' but a familial 'I' who has to take on a role in the family for resilience. In this sense, the self-realization is connected to what they have to do to restore the shattered family. The participants addressed multiple aspects of the self, which can be viewed as different roles in the family.

The types of self-recognition that the participants showed can be viewed as a natural phenomenon in Korean family culture, which expects the remaining males to replace the

patriarchal roles instead of the deceased family head. It should be acknowledged that as the informants in this study were aged from 75 to 85, their perceptions of their positions in the family were connected to a sense of cultural virtue. Nonetheless, their self-descriptions were deeply linked to their aspirations for family reconstruction after the violent event based on the family identity. Their self-awareness was referred to as the acceptance of the familial responsibility to restore the family.

The Head of the Family

The first image from victims' description is the head of the family. As informants are the only or one of few survivors in the family who are alive today, they accept the reality that they are the leader of their family. It may refer to a self-image that navigates the reconstruction of the shattered family by restoring genealogy collapsed by mass killing. It is a responsibility given to survivors as other family members were killed by the killing, and other surviving members died of mental disease or committed suicide. Although the survivors are second or third sons or daughters, they take the role as the head. For example, Ki No-Jung told of how he became the person who has to continue the family lineage, and therefore he has been playing the role of the head of his family.

> Eleven members died in my family. It was extermination. How can I understand this? Would you have been able to accept this? I am the only male survivor in my family. My father and uncles were all killed. I am the only survivor. I became the head of my family from an early age. (…) As a matter of fact, I have tried so hard to live morally. I tried harder than others. I did so in order not to let those who killed my father look down on my family.

Since he became the head of the family, he has tried to live morally. He continued to explain that he did not take an act of revenge on his enemies because he wanted to avoid vengeance and a negative effect on his family. Jung Seok-Hee and Yoon Jung-Hee told of how they are the only survivors who remember and can discover what has happened to their family. Importantly, they expressed this aspect with the familial event of building family graves. As explained above, building family graves was a turning point in their family story, by which they made a symbolic meaning for the reconstruction of the family. To explain this further, Yoon Jung-Hee used the symbol of the house for the dead. As her father died outside, in her mind, she wanted to give him

a proper house for another life. This is what the only survivor as the head of the family had to do, and therefore her father and her family as a whole can be remembered by people.

> I am OK, not having my own house. I am fine with living with no house. Why? Because I built a house for my ancestors! I am able to die now. But what I want to do when I am still alive is to help to build a memorial peace park. So, I can inscribe my father's name on the memorial tower. My heart beats fast when I think of this plan.

A similar narrative also appeared in Jung Seok-Hee's story. He also linked building a family grave to the meaning of family restoration. As quoted earlier in this chapter, he stated that his main motivation of his life is to restore his destroyed family. His narratives tell that he is the only person who can restore his family through building a family grave because it is a symbol of continuation of the family line.

Protector

Relatedly, victims also spoke as if they are the protector of the remaining family members and their children from further discrimination and social stigmatization. Because what happened to their families is a collective form of family suffering that the descendants inherit, participants stated that they fear that their children and grandchildren may experience the same suffering. They as the head of the family have to protect their family members from further discrimination by ending social stigmatization.

> You know, what I do is for my family, in particular, for my children and grandchildren. I said that my siblings and I suffered a lot. Yes, that's true. We were scattered here and there. We were not able to get along with each other after my father's death. Uh, it's a sad story. But the story shouldn't be stopped there.
>
> (Yoon Jung-Hee)

> Yes, I have to protect my children. It's okay I myself have lived this life, but my children must live differently. Honestly, I have been living for them as a mother.
>
> (Jeon Mi-Kyung)

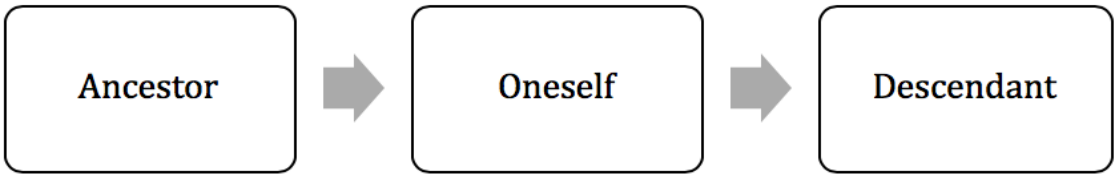
> In the beginning, I was hesitating to find the truth because I feared past memories.

> It's a trauma, but I was indeed worried that my daughters would experience the same disadvantages that I did. I wanted to protect them from social discrimination.
>
> (Jung Soek-Hee)

> I have nothing else but only my children. I have been living for them. What do I have in my life? After my father' death, I lost everything. But what I have is my children, and have protected them my entire life.
>
> (Cho Hye-Ja)

Messenger of the Family Value

Moreover, victims understood themselves as the one who maintain and deliver family values. As noted in the previous section, victims preserve family values as direct motivation of their behaviors. The question of what to do for the family restoration is related to delivering family values to descendants. Victims spoke about this, portraying themselves as the one located between their ancestors and descendants. As the head of the family and a messenger who keeps the family values by bridging the older and younger generations, victims narrated their stories along with the values. These values were delivered in the words of their ancestors, and the deceased and victims are the agents for keeping such values in the family.



Both Ki No-Jung and Kim Jang-Ho addressed the value of living by a moral code. They stated that they were motivated by their ancestors' words of not doing harm. They declared that the wisdom of behaviors were their family values, and therefore they narrated their stories and provided social values in accordance with the family values.

> I tried to lead by example, to change their perception of me. Therefore, I was harsh on myself in terms of how to behave… like purifying myself and not following the same wrong act that others have done to me. That was what my grandmother always told me. Even though my family was harmed, if I'd done the same act toward my

> enemies, I could revenge them, but it would not be true revenge, would it? True revenge, now I think, is living well and prospering, so I tried my best in my life to be like that. And, as I said, I considered much about my family history. You know the Ki clan. That is…. what people should do. I could hardly study, but personhood descends from the blood, the ancestors. That's why I have been living like this.
>
> (Ki No-Jung)

> An act of revenge? Never done it like that for sure. Well… I… could do something just as I was treated for a youthful indiscretion. I knew where the person lived. However, you know… what the past time like. But still I just didn't think about revenge at all… I mean, at least, that is what my grandparent always told me and what my ancestors would have done.
>
> (Kim Jang-Ho)

The participants showed three types of self-image. As the head of the family who survived from the eradication of the communist family, they accepted tasks given to them for the family. They spoke about how building a family grave was a symbol of family reconstruction. Symbolic acts form the ground for the shattered family to be resilient. As the protector, victims described that they attempted to resist from the continuation of social stigmatization towards their children, as well as the extended family. Also, victims played a role as a messenger of family values. As the family could have disappeared in history, they try to restore the endangered family by maintaining family values given from their ancestors. As the messenger of family values, victims link the older generation who suffered from victimization and the younger generation within the family and the broader clan.

These self-images ought to be understood with the familial mindset that these participants presented. When they mirror their realization that they are perceived as the family leader who must look after the shattered family as a result of the killing, it implies that they undertake a cultural of 'we-ness' in familism. The sense of 'we-ness' in their family and wider family clan motivates them to take the roles of head of the family, trying to do familial tasks given to them. The reconstruction of their family is linked to the restoration of the family clan. This wholeness propels victims to expand the question of who I am in relation to the family. It is a common mindset in Korean people whose identity is predominantly affiliated with the family clan. In this sense, the self-descriptions are inextricably linked to what they ought to do for family restoration,

and the resilient family restoration is in line with their family values, which they accept as a behavioral principle. The meaning of reconciliation emerged in this light. As will be seen, reconciliation is a perceived apparatus to restore the family in resiliency, and therefore they generally developed the meaning of reconciliation regarding that purpose.

Narrative Meaning of Reconciliation

The thematic analysis has found that meanings of reconciliation in these participants' autobiographical narratives were, to varying extents, associated with victims' aspirations of family reconstruction that is characterized by a resilient form of family restoration. In expressing this desire, victims addressed their familial mindsets, describing their pride in their family and suffering at the same time, and the diverse self-image as one who ought to restore the shattered family. In portraying who they are in the narrative processing, their roles are positively embodied. Victims' mindsets and self-recognition are rooted in their family identity, by which they build their stories as part of family stories, using symbolic family events and values as a sign of restoration. From the narrative approach, the meaning of reconciliation is in line with this processing. The meanings of reconciliation that the participants proclaimed can be categorized as no revengeful form of living, social justice, restoring reputation, and historical rightness. These four meanings are explained below.

No Revenge as the Root of Reconciliation

Civilian massacres as a form of political violence, as explained in Chapter Two, were not only conducted by the state authority towards civilians, but also by legitimized local rightists as agents for killing. In each village, the ideological dispute was intensified in concert with private emotions between villagers, and therefore killing between former friends and neighbors was a common phenomenon.[554] At this level, conflicts were spread between families, and people had to live together as victims and offenders in the same village. Everyday life was full of a confrontation between the families of victims (leftists) and offenders (rightists), and victim families were

[554] As noted in Chapter Two, some historians explain that civilian massacres during the Korean War were characterized by killing for private emotions among different level of groups at the local level. Korean society at that time had a potential of social conflict between landowners and tenants, Christians and the leftists, and between families. These social conflicts were collaborated and intensified with the ideological dispute between the leftists and the rightists after the independence. Thus, the mass killing in many cases were not only for political reasons but also for personal justification rooted in previous social conflict. For this aspect, see Park, *The Korean War in Villages*.

isolated from and oppressed by the social structure dominated by rightists authorities.

Looking back and speaking about these memories of family suffering and living together with their enemies who had accused them and killed one or more of their family members, some respondents emphasized the virtue of 'no revenge'. Their narratives showed that their motivations of no revenge towards their local enemies arose not just from personal awareness of morality but rather have something to do with family values that are inherited from their ancestors. As noted above, victims gave family values as their behavioral principle, and these signify the family rules. Interestingly, victims tended to link their no revenge principle to the broader level of reconciliation. Two participants emphasized not doing harm towards their offenders. By not committing the same act as the offenders did to them, victims pursued moral behaviors that derive from family values.

> As a matter of fact, when my anger swelled up within me, I really wanted to go and glut my revenge on him immediately. What I kept remembering was my father and grandfather's behaviors that they showed me when they were still alive. I've been motivated by what they had done in the village. I had great respect for them.
>
> (Kim Jang-Ho)

> My brother would not like it if I kept a negative emotion all day long. I remember who he is and behave in the way that he would recommend to me. I have never done bad things to those who accused my brother and my family.
>
> (Shin Soon-Ran)

What is salient in understanding this meaning of reconciliation is that victims spoke of the 'no revenge' principle along with their desire to restore the family in a moral way. They spoke as if revenge is a sign that distinguishes their family from the offenders who harmed and continuously suppressed their family. By not committing the same violent act, they pursued a better way to overcome the cycle of revenge and violence.

Both Jung Seok-Hee and Ki No-Jung elaborated this aspect more eloquently. In their narratives, they expressed that their present behaviors derive from their interpretation of what their parents and grandparents would say to them. Family values seem to play an important role in their narratives, and their interpretation of 'no revenge' was not just from their moral consciousness but also from their belief in the family as a moral community. As noted above, when Ki said what

true revenge is, his narratives show that he generated his meaning concerning his family. Jung Seok-Hee explained this example more clearly.

> You know, in Korean's tradition… especially from the perspective of the Confucianism-rooted culture and tradition, if children do not revenge their parents' enemies, that is thought as 'undutifulness' for a long time. But I think, that does not mean 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth', but like living with consciousness. You know, I always think this way. I do want to or have to revenge toward those who killed my parents. But, in order to do so, I ought not to repeat the same act just as they did to us.

Although they did not directly mention that their behaviors are an act of restoring their relationship with their enemies, they defended their view that they have maintained these sorts of behaviors as a gesture of reconciliation. Importantly, victims interpreted their behaviors as a basis of a broader version of reconciliation, as interpersonal coexistence without violent acts can be a microcosm of national reconciliation between victim and offender groups as well as citizens and the government. Some scholars understand that avoidance of revenge is part of reconciliation in the form of coexistence within the same community between victims and offenders of political violence,[555] and these respondents expanded the meaning of avoidance of violent acts to the national dimension of reconciliation.

Reconciliation as Social Justice

The second meaning of reconciliation that victims developed can be categorized as reconciliation as social justice. The suffering that victims experienced stems from unfavorable social environments towards the surviving and bereaved family members of the deceased. Victims in their autobiographical narratives described how the social system was designed to suppress them even after the war, and why they had poor and unsuccessful lives. Particularly, collective punishment was the social fetter, precluding victims and their families from living as lay citizenz in society. Moreover, the wealth and normal life of remaining family members also collapsed. Life for them was a struggle not only with resentment and sorrow but also with poor living conditions.

In this regard, victims stated that reconciliation needs to focus on satisfying social justice, aiming

[555] Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.

for an equilibrium in economic and social conditions between victims and offenders. For victims, social justice means transforming suppressive social and economic structures, by which victims can attain a higher social status and consider reconciliation. One participant, Jung Seok-Hee, developed this aspect of reconciliation after he stated why he did not take revenge on his enemies. Interestingly, he did not differentiate between interpersonal and social perspectives of reconciliation - both are closely linked in his mind. He said that true revenge is living better than his enemies. However, in order to do so, individual must strive to live morally and society must provide social conditions such that victims can attain a higher social status. He stated that victims are capable of thinking of reconciliation and even forgiveness only when such social conditions are met.

> These days, reconciliation and forgiveness are spoken of very often socially and politically. I know these are important but not easy, huh? We human beings have emotions. So, we need something to help us change the emotional desire for revenge and forgive my enemies, and in my understanding, this is only possible when we are better off than them. Only when we have deeper and broader thoughts and our social status is higher than theirs, do we have space for thinking about and actually conducting reconciliation and forgiveness. Because we were the victimized… Such a switch is very critical for these. Without the switch, forgiveness and reconciliation are unlikely. Forgiveness is religiously advocated, and reconciliation is political. Yes, so important. Don't get me wrong. These may play a guiding role to make the society mature. But those values shouldn't be like simple rhetoric, I think. Well, maybe those values belong to the divine sphere. But still I think, reconciliation and forgiveness are… possible at the human level. Why? How? To make it possible, there should be social conditions built for victims to overcome their emotions. What is it? I say, it is a social structure that allows victims to look down on the offenders from a higher social status.
>
> …
>
> We victims should be socially and economically poorer than them. Ouch, how on earth could you come up with reconciliation and forgiveness when you are damn hungry? Also, we should have wholesome thoughts. Maybe religious power enables this. I don't know about this well, but ordinary people need something transcending in a social manner; not just a religious one.

This social and economic concern seemed to have something to do with victims' fear coming from the experience of economic and social discrimination. They fear continuous discrimination which can be inherited by their children. Victims' self-image as protectors is related to this meaning of reconciliation. That is, victims defended social justice, in order to avoid further discrimination against their family members, in particular, their children. They mentioned that they need to guard their children from what they have experienced, and the protective act is an attempt to restore the family that suffered from social and economic inequality.

> For what it's worth, my children have nothing to do with this suffering. They don't know what was going on. They are smart and do what they love to do. They are good. They feel happy about what they do now. I am also happy if they are happy. I would be very angry if my children had to go through what I did. Therefore, I had to protect them from that discrimination. That is why I keep saying that equality is a key value. Only equality does the job.
>
> (Cho Hye-Ja)

> I said I have been living for my children, and I earned some money by running this hair salon for about thirty years. So, as a matter of fact, I had no problem to raise them by myself. But, then, that is not the point. Isn't it? (…) What is important is to make a society in which people like myself and my children can do whatever they want freely without any discrimination.
>
> (Jeon Mi-Kyung)

> Because we have suffered from extreme poverty since the event, I couldn't really come up with what reconciliation would be for me. I reckon, reconciliation is not a matter of money or something, but erm something different. Right? But, still, we are in hunger. I think it firstly needs to meet this kind of needs and then we can think of something bigger than that.
>
> (Moon Yang-Ja)

These participants concluded their stories with these appeal to social and economic justice in society. As for reconciliation, they started from the realization that society does not guarantee them social and economic equality. According to them, reconciliation, if it is to be victim-centered, cannot be thought of unless equal rights are restored. It is a demand to meet social and economic

justice for victims so that they can be recognized as ordinary citizens who enjoy civic rights.[556] In this perspective, reconciliation is not limited to governmental compensation, but more related to reparative justice, aiming for the transformation of an unjust social structure.[557]

Reconciliation is to Restore Impaired Reputation

Surviving and bereaved family members also struggle with impaired family reputations. The social stigmatization that operates as a public structure of discriminating against victims labelled them as 'commies' or 'the family of commies'. With such a dishonored reputation, victims and their family members live as second-class citizens in society. Some scholars pointed out that the impaired reputation as the family of commies played a discriminative role for the victims' families, and for those victims who hold a noble family identity, it is a disgraceful transition from a high-class family to one of low class.[558]

As presented above, the participants in this study had a strong pride in their families as noble and high-class families, and they find the impaired reputation of the family a serious shame. According to them, because this harms their family pride, it is a significant impediment for reconciliation. In this regard, victims at first said that the truth needs to be recovered, in order to restore the harmed reputation of their family. Victims said that truth is regarded as the important beginning of restoring reputation.

> Only the truth will prove that my family did not do anything wrong. We should recover the impaired reputation!
>
> (Shin Soon-Ran)

> Of course, restoring the reputation of my family is what I wanted. I have been working to find the truth. Without the acknowledgement that my family and myself are not communists, our descendants will be discriminated again.
>
> (Jung Seok-Hee)

[556] Some political reconciliation theorists have argued this aspect of reconciliation. See, Moellendorf, 'Reconciliation as a Political Value'; Murphy, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation*; Daniel Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace*.
[557] Lapante, 'The Plural Justice Aims of Reparations'; Fletcher and Weinstein, 'Violence and Social Repair'; Harvey Weinstein, 'Victims, Transitional Justice and Social Reconstruction'.
[558] Myung-Hee Kim, 'The Social Construction of Trauma: A Case Study of "Family Trauma" in Bereaved Families during the Korean War in Relation to the Complications of Rectifying the Past', *Society and History* 101 (2014): 311–51.

These assertions, however, did not offer an interpretation of reconciliation, but a general aspiration regarding the shattered situation of the family. Only one participant, Yoon Jung-Hee, developed the relationship by linking the restoration of reputation to a broader notion of reconciliation. She offered reasons why the restoration of the family is the fundamental condition of reconciliation, leading to a reconciled nation. While telling her story, her tone reflected how her family lineage is honored, and this mindset of pride in her family caused deep wounds in her mind.

> I really wanted to show you what I did for my ancestors; not to brag but just to tell my family story. Because it is so important to history. I repeat telling this story over and over again as it is a truth and is important. I am not lying. Stories like that of my family need to be documented. Of course, other victims and their stories are poignant, but my family and what I did for them are particularly important. [*pause*] You can see why I have lived in this way. I sustained a deep wound from the fact that my family was and is treated like this. I am not OK with this treatment. I have to prove that my family had no guilt, and it must be documented.

She spoke with an appealing tone. Then, she prudently stated how she felt about what reconciliation ought to be and how it can be achieved when I asked her the meaning of reconciliation. She took this to mean understanding that the family is no longer an individual group but an elementary unit comprising the nation, that needs to be reconciled.

> At first, there too many people who died namelessly. The truth must be found, so that their impaired reputation can be restored. I have thought about reconciliation and peace recently. I think, reconciliation is… social integration; putting people together. People can be integrated only when they feel equal. Right? And, the integration brings a good nation, or what we say today; reconciliation. I believe that reconciliation is a key for society to have stability and security. But what I want to say is that the most important thing here is the restoration of the reputation of those who needlessly died. Otherwise, we victims won't be able to feel equality because we have been living with these unjust social conditions for too many years. A peaceful world will come after it is restored!

Here, it is important to be reminded that victims are still branded as 'reds'. Victims often experience inequality in public sectors in their lives, and they struggle with the social and political circumstances, perpetuating their social status. Thus, this sense of reconciliation has something to do with moral reparative form of justice. When Teitel states that "moral reparations are intended to repair the shame and humiliation previously inflicted on victims and to restore their reputation and equal status in the public eyes,"[559] restoring the impaired reputation corresponds to victims' social need that changes the negative perception of the public towards them. Importantly, victims in this study sought this aspect in relation to the family reputation, instead of requiring personal human rights. As Yoon Jung-Hee expressed, this form may lead a broader vision of reconciliation, which ought to meet victims' family restoration.

Reconciliation dwells in historical rightness

The final meaning of reconciliation points to historical rightness. The notion of historical rightness can be viewed as a forward-looking prospect for a desirable future of the nation aiming at great influence in the world, and a backward one that reflects on the past and rectifies historical wrongs.[560] For victims, historical rightness refers to the backward-looking provision emerging from victims' generative concerns for the future generation. Indeed, victims in this study showed a great concern of why historical rectification is critical and how their experience and stories can play a role in supporting and guaranteeing it. Moreover, by achieving historical rightness, they want to rectify the impaired reputation of their family.

Amongst others, Kim Jang-Ho asserted the need for historical rightness and underlined the importance of peace education as a form of deterrence. Kim, who noted that his behavioral principles come from his pride and his ancestor's words, stated that if he had done something wrong, he would bring shame to their family and their ancestors. Throughout his story, Kim stated

[559] Teitel, *Transitional Justice*, 126-7.
[560] Steven G. Smith, 'Historical Rightness', *Soundings* 98, no. 2 (2015): 127–45.

that their family has been abandoned in history. His appeal to historical rightness provided coherence to his story, and his meaning of reconciliation is in line with this narrative configuration of the experience of abandonment and the need for historical rightness.

> What I want to say is that one must understand history rightly… why we were victimized. 'Our nation is safe! Stay at home and protect Seoul!' Citizens believed Rhee's speech. What happened then? Those who left Seoul and took refugee were praised as heroes and those who remained were slaughtered. Is that a safe nation? Can we trust in the authority?

In this regard, he argued that historical education is salient. According to him, reconciliation starts and continues with educational endeavours to correct historical wrongs, because it raises the recognition of their victimization and suffering.

> We [*victims*] have to educate people. Young people must know that this nation killed innocent civilians. This kind of event can take place at any time again if young people do not recognize this. (…) I want to emphasize the value of respect for all living beings. Prosperity, economic wealth, wealth and power nation... all sounds good. But, the most urgent and critical value is the value of life… [*sigh*] Honestly, I am worried about the next generation. The future. So, we need to raise our voice in expressing the value of life and educate in this way. Victims, we can do this as we are the living witnesses. (…) That's why historical education is so important. To remember rightly. The older generations' memories are segmented. But historical education can transform the distorted record of history.

When stating the need for education for historical rightness, he was aware of victims' role in it. He thought because victims witnessed the unjust past and the barbarity of the state power, only they can speak out to deter further violence. Shin Soon-Ran also emphasized the importance of remembrance which has an educational effect. Shin has been involved in memorial services by reciting her poems. She underlined that her last hope for the future is the establishment of a memorial park. She provided two meanings of remembrance.

> There are two reasons for that. First, we survivors would feel much more relieved. You cannot imagine the emotion from not knowing about where your family members are buried. I feel like I abandoned my brother. I feel guilty to survive and live until

> today. The memorial park would, at least, comfort this feeling, and we would feel much relieved. Second, it has an educational effect. If there were no such thing, our descendants would know nothing about it. I would not be able to endure if my brother's name and his death are forgotten meaninglessly. I believe, I want to believe that the younger generation gets the chance to… to... how to say this, to… look back on our dark history and learn something from it.

In this manner, victims demand historical correction for reconciliation to take place. This aspect of reconciliation is historical in that it needs a proper historical response to the legacies of an evil past in a way that rectifies the distorted and partial record of history. For this task, these victims advocated the correction of history textbooks, including their family stories as an example of the scapegoat of unjust historical events on the one hand. On the other, they participated in some campaigns to demand historical justice by finding truth and restoring the impaired reputation of their family. These activities allowed them to realize what they ought to do for the restoration of the family as well as historical correction, leading the vision of reconciliation.

Summary of the Analysis

The thematic analysis of this chapter has shown that victims shared a core theme, resilient family restoration, which was detailed in victims' mindsets and self-recognition. Victims' pursuit of family reconstruction as a critical factor of meaning-making was expressed in the form of a resilient sense of family restoration for their shattered families in the aftermath of civilian massacres and continued victimization. They pursued reinstating their families to the way they used to be and a well-being life through bouncing back. These narratives were coherent in participants' autobiographical narratives. By telling these coherent narratives, victims were able to address subjective perspectives on their suffering and meaning.

There were four aspects of the meaning of reconciliation developed. Meanings that victims provided from their narrative processing were closely connected to their image of resilient family restoration. First, avoiding revengeful acts towards enemies is an expression that their family is different from the offenders' family. Motivated by family values, victims spoke about how the micro-level of coexistence could be enlarged at the macro-level of national reconciliation in a way to pursue no retribution. As a deterrence to further violence, victims are able to end the retributive cycle of violence. Whether in a positive or negative sense, this behavior of victims is

perceived as a gesture of reconciliation. Second, participants stated that social justice is essential. As family suffering arises from social discrimination that destroys families socially and economically, building a socially and economically just system is critical. Social and economic justice would minimize the suffering that their family experienced, and that their descendants would experience. Third, restoring the impaired reputation is a prerequisite for reconciliation. Social defamation as communists or the family of communists brings severe harm to families who were once noble and of high class, but victimized in the war. Restoring the impaired reputations of their families was a fundamental attempt for reconciliation. Last, correcting historical wrong in the right way is also critical. Because victims are unable to let the historical wrong remain as they are, reconciliation must be carried out in a way that corrects historical wrongs. By looking backwards, national history can be healed. In this respect, victims expressed that historical education is to correct the wrongs, and they can act as living witnesses. This is perceived as a remembrance of victims' suffering on the one hand, and a generative act for victims to contribute to a peaceful society with no wars and violence on the other. These meanings were generated in accordance with the resilient image of family restoration, reflecting their pursuit of family reconstruction.

7.4 Synthesis and Reflection of the Findings

This chapter illustrated the narrative processing of victims who declared family identity to make sense of the presence of suffering after civilian massacres, and to develop meaning for reconciliation inherent in the autobiographical genre of personal stories. Here, I would like to summarize and evaluate what has been reported in this chapter.

Family identity provides individuals with a motif in autobiography. When autobiographical authors adopt their family identity as the primary source of storytelling, their narratives are not only individual stories but rather those of the family. Victims who compose their autobiographical narrative in line with their family identity weave their personal stories as part of a grand family story. The narrators develop their stories centering around familism. In doing this, individual victims narrate remembered suffering that the family members together endure on the one hand and state familial event, values, and traditions on the other.

Building on the theoretical framework, this chapter has presented a detailed analysis of some participants' autobiographical narrative meaning of reconciliation. The structural analysis showed that these victims' narratives, to varying extents, took the form of family stories. Violent events and subsequent suffering are traumatic events that the family experience together.

Centering around the memories of family suffering, victims composed their stories as part of a grand account of their family. Building the emplotment regarding the family, victims addressed their desire for family reconstruction in the aftermath of political violence. In doing so, the participants moreover highlighted some familial episodes as symbols of family reconstruction. Episodes such as building a family gravesite and family rituals are described. Family values are also recounted to outline family rules. By speaking about family events and values, victims strengthen their motivation for family reconstruction. The structural features of the respondents explain how they conceived a family-oriented sense of reconciliation and what enabled them to generate this.

The thematic analysis also revealed that those victims told their family stories according to a theme of family reconstruction. This theme refers to the resiliency of restoring the shattered family as a functioning unit, and first emerged from their familial mindset. Victims stated their strong pride in the family. They described their family lineage and social class, and this familial information is linked to their family suffering. They emphasized that their families suffered, although they were noble and respected historically. Familial mindset is rooted in their realization of unjust history. The suffering that the family has endured is not just, and they should not have been unjustly treated. In telling their family stories in this way, victims also identified their self-realization in the family. Victims described themselves as the only survivors in their family. Since the family was shattered by the violent event, they are the only survivor who needs to maintain the family genealogy. Moreover, victims play a role as a protector of their descendants. As the violation is not personal but familial in the name of collective guilt, victims wanted to avoid the cycle of familial discrimination. Also, the victims portrayed themselves as messengers of family values and traditions, which represent efforts to make connections between the older and younger generations. This is seen as victims' aspirations to reconstruct the deconstructed family functions. Maintaining family values and tradition is a way of restoring the family. This narrative processing allows victims to develop some meanings for reconciliation. Importantly, their sense of reconciliation is embedded in their pursuit of family reconstruction based on the family experience of suffering, expressed in individual, social, and historical ways. At the individual level, victims advocated no retribution toward enemies. Not doing harm is a family value that they learnt from their ancestors. Although they had to coexist with their offenders, their family values guided them not to repeat the same acts. Victims declared that true revenge is not personal but social. Social conditions are the key for victims to act and take revenge morally. This value then expands to the social level of reconciliation, and at this level, victims stated that social and economic justice is important. As their families' suffering arose from social discrimination and poverty, transforming the discriminative social structure becomes a critical part of reconciliation.

Moreover, restoring a harmed reputation is vital. Their families have been labelled a family of communists. This is not only collective guilt but also disgrace for their family status in history and society. Victims said that reconciliation may start with an acknowledgement that their families were and are innocent and have been unjustly treated. Last, reconciliation comes from historical rightness. It can grow within an attempt to correct the wrong records of history; it refers to their desire that history must know that their family are historical victims. At the same time, victims commonly said that their family stories can function as educational references to enable the next generation to understand what happened in history. Historical rightness may guarantee a peaceful future, and reconciliation can grow within it.

Regarding the research findings addressed in this chapter, two additional yet important points ought to be mentioned, and need full attention in further research. First, the family-oriented narratives are told within a historical context. Participants who are subject to this chapter's investigation composed their autobiographies, centering around their family identity. Although their stories are in line with the aspiration of the family reconstruction, it is critical to grasp their narratives with regard to the historical context as the central motif of the family story is the historical event of civilian massacres and the life of suffering thereafter. Indeed, their narratives were deeply embedded in their historical awareness and how their family has survived in the historical proceeding. Thus, while these participants talk about family stories and suffering, it is a testimony in the historical background. However, unlike those participants addressed in the previous chapter, some in this chapter were more focused on family storytelling based on their family identity. Whereas the former composed their autobiographical narratives in the light of national identity as Korean and collective identity as victims, the latter were more embedded in their family suffering rather than victims as a whole. They paid more attention to how their family suffered and what roles they had to play in order to reinstate the deconstructed family. As a result, their narrative understanding of the world, self-recognition, and the meaning of reconciliation constitute their primary concern for family reconstruction. By placing reconciliation within the context of family suffering, victims hope that they and their families can be set free from the economic and social suffering resulting from civilian massacres.

Second, these participants' autobiographies needs to be concerned with the family culture of Korean society. As noted above, the traditional and contemporary Korean society is characterized by familism that functions as a social structure. It is a sociocultural system, which governs individual mindset and behaviors. Moreover, it also affects personal narratives as these participants addressed in their autobiography. In this light, victims' familial mindset and self-recognition that this chapter addressed are their sociocultural emanation in autobiography. It implies that the sociocultural factors influence victims' narrative processing in making sense of

the selfhood and the life of suffering. Meanings of reconciliation that are thought of as tools for the family reconstruction is the reflection coming from the influential factors. In short, reconciliation is a contextual manifestation; rather than a universal ethic.

7.5 Summary

This chapter illustrated the narrative processing of victims whose autobiographical narratives are identical to family stories that contain family experiences and suffering in the aftermath of civilian massacres and continued victimization. I aimed to explain how they understand the suffering and recognize themselves as subjective agents for developing meaning for reconciliation. To do so, I first reported the structural analysis which showed that the victims' autobiographies are a genre of family story. By telling of familial events, values, and suffering as a result of the massacres and the victimization, victims composed their family stories in a consistent manner. Second, I presented the thematic analysis, which showed that victims developed some meaning for reconciliation with regard to their family suffering and desire for family reconstruction. The meanings that victims narrated are not just personal or social, but familial. Although the implications are expressed in a personal, social and historical sense, their narrative reasoning showed that they are grounded in the fundamental aspiration for family reconstruction.

Chapter 8
Reliance on Religious Narratives

> I speak very little about my father because I don't want to remember and talk about him. It hurts. This world is divided between good and evil. Um… what happened to my father is an event of this world, the evil. If I was a non-believer, I wouldn't have been able to understand why the event happened to my father. But as a believer, I can understand it spiritually. If I don't understand about my father and my life in this way, I wouldn't have a… a proper frame to interpret and accept these events happening to me. It would be groundless. Indeed, others [*victims*] still feel embittered. They don't know how to understand and accept this. I have tried to tell stories about my father's death and my family's and my life thereafter in a religious way. Otherwise, I couldn't have accepted it at all! Why me? Why me? I would have thought like, 'Is this my destiny?' So, there are no other ways to understand it, but only in the religious manner.
>
> - Participant, Choi Kyun-Sik

This chapter examines the third aspect of victims' narrative processing, which is characterized by religious identity, storytelling, and meaning. Unlike national and family identities that commonly emerged in victims in general, victims who hold religious identity distinctively identified themselves and told their stories along with religious narratives. Among the eighteen participants, five participants declared their religious identity, Christians, by which they described their life stories and lives of suffering during and after the civilian massacres and continued victimization, and sought meaning of reconciliation.[561] Although it is only five respondents, it was worthwhile investigating the influence of religious identity on victims' narrative reasoning, because its narratives are a powerful source for individuals to make sense of

[561] When it comes to religious identity, this study focuses on Christian victims only. That is because it was only Christian identity among other religious identities, which affected victims' autobiographical narrative processing and meaning-making, leading them to the development of self-recognition and meaning of reconciliation. In interviewing the research respondents, two participants expressed that they are Buddhist while telling their stories. However, they didn't seem to rely on Buddhist identity as much as what Christian victims did in autobiographical reasoning. They occasionally showed some sentiments motivated by the identity, but from my judgement, it had little to do with narrative coherence and integrity in developing autobiographical narrative reasoning. In contrast, Christian victims, as this chapter will address, utilized their religious identity considerably. By relying on different forms of religious narratives, they interpreted their suffering and proclaimed reconciliation subjectively. Accordingly, it was worthwhile including and investigating those victims' narrative reasoning as an internal mechanism.

life experience and build redemptive meaning as mentioned in Chapter 5. Indeed, five participants who hold Christian identity in this study showed more engagement of interpretation of the past event, present, and the future and meaning-making than other participants. Therefore, while the preceding two chapters reported victims' narratives embedded in their national and family identity that commonly appeared with some representative stories, this chapter provides a focused investigation of the five particular participants' autobiographical narratives to respond to the research questions. Moreover, regarding religious identity, I did not differentiate informants according to their denominations and sects within Christianity. Instead, I was only concerned with how each informant spoke about their religious identity and how it affected their storytelling and meaning-making. For the intention of this thesis, I wanted to avoid a theological dispute and pay attention to victims' meaning-making.

To summarize the finding and discussions in the following sections, Christian victims' life stories resemble religious testimony. Their narratives were characterized by religious language, stories, and discourse in concert with religious metaphors, and comparison with biblical characters, and events. By using different types of rhetoric, those victims expressed their suffering in a religious manner. In doing so, they adopted a religious interpretation to provide meaning for reconciliation. Thus, the data was full of religious narratives that are embedded in their life stories. Thematic analysis revealed that victims share an underlying theme, eschatology, which refers to an apocalyptic vision of human history. By plotting their life stories on the basis of the eschatological sense of life, suffering, and human history, victims addressed their worldview and self-recognition, and found meaning in their lives as well as the value of reconciliation. Above all, victims expressed their worldview in a distinction between good and evil. Relying on the binary religious narratives, victims understand themselves as children of God and as redemptive sufferers who are suppressed by an evil power. In understanding their experiences and the world in this way, victims express themselves as agents to realize the kingdom of God, in which the evil power will be judged, and their suffering will be finally redeemed. This eschatological approach to their life experience of victimization motivates them to ponder and associate with reconciliation as a form of God' righteousness.

8.1 Understanding Religious Identity in Autobiographical Narratives

Since this chapter is particularly focused on victims' religious form of autobiography, speaking about their suffering and subjective meaning of reconciliation in the aftermath of civilian massacres, understanding how religious narratives affect victims' meaning-making is necessary.

For this, I gave an overview of some theoretical implications of the relationship between religious identity, narratives, and meaning-making in Chapter 5. Scholars have noted that religious identity is a production of religious narratives. As narratives outline the boundaries of religious belief and affiliation, religious identity depends essentially on what the narratives guide. The narrative perspective on religious identity, then, implies that religious individuals' autobiography is a reflection of their association with religious narratives, by which they portray who they are and develop meaning of life religiously.

Religious narratives so understood are a critical provider of interpretation to life events. They give people a particular understanding of the world and human life, leading them to the sphere of spirituality. Individuals, then, make sense of their worldly experiences through the lens of the metaphysical or transcendental approach. Thus, religious interpretation is a direct guidance of meaning-making. Interestingly, individuals are expected to adopt the paradigmatic or institutional interpretation to maintain their identity. By aligning with prescriptive interpretations of religious institutions, individuals embrace the way that institutions offer to see the world and their lives.

In this aspect, religious narratives promote the spiritual meaning of life in the face of life's adversities. Meanings are generated through the instructive or normative interpretation, and they help individuals to cope with life challenges in religious ways. Amongst many other forms, three aspects of religious narratives may be fertile resources for such narratives: religious stories, aphorism, and rhetoric. These forms of religious narratives may characterize autobiography, allowing the authors to discover meaning according to what the narratives infer.

8.2 Investigating Narrative Structure

This section presents a structural analysis on the five victims' autobiographical narratives. It provides overall characteristics of the narratives, including organization and rhetoric.[562] Narrative structure that victims build reinforces their meaning of reconciliation based on their experiences. Structural analysis of the victims' narratives illustrates that victims compose their life stories as a religious form of testimony. Employing a religious tone and format, they understand their life of suffering religiously. Religious rhetoric characterized their narratives, and victims relied on religious narratives to recount their life stories of loss and grief as a result of the violent event and further suppression.

[562] Barthes, 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative'.

Telling Autobiographical Stories as Religious Testimony

There was a structural similarity evident in the five victims' autobiographical stories: victims construct their life stories as a religious testimony. Their narratives were marked by a confessional tone, language, and expressions. Stories were not merely built from autobiographical memories but constructed by and told with religious content. Victims told their life stories in the form of religious testimonies as if they were telling them to other religious people. This allowed them to place religious interpretation on what they said. In other words, victims' narrative structure as religious testimony drew them to religiously interpreted meaning.

To clarify this narrative pattern, victims told their stories according to their expression of religious identity at the beginning of storytelling. Addressing religious identity seemed critical for building a mutual trust with the interviewer. Personal stories were described as a religious confession in the light of suffering. The stories were told and retold with a religious interpretation. Importantly, victims moved between personal story and religious interpretation, and thereby sought to give meaning to their life of suffering. This process was repeated several times. In this process, victims also enhanced their self-recognition as religious people in difficult phases of their lives. Meanings for reconciliation emerged from this process.

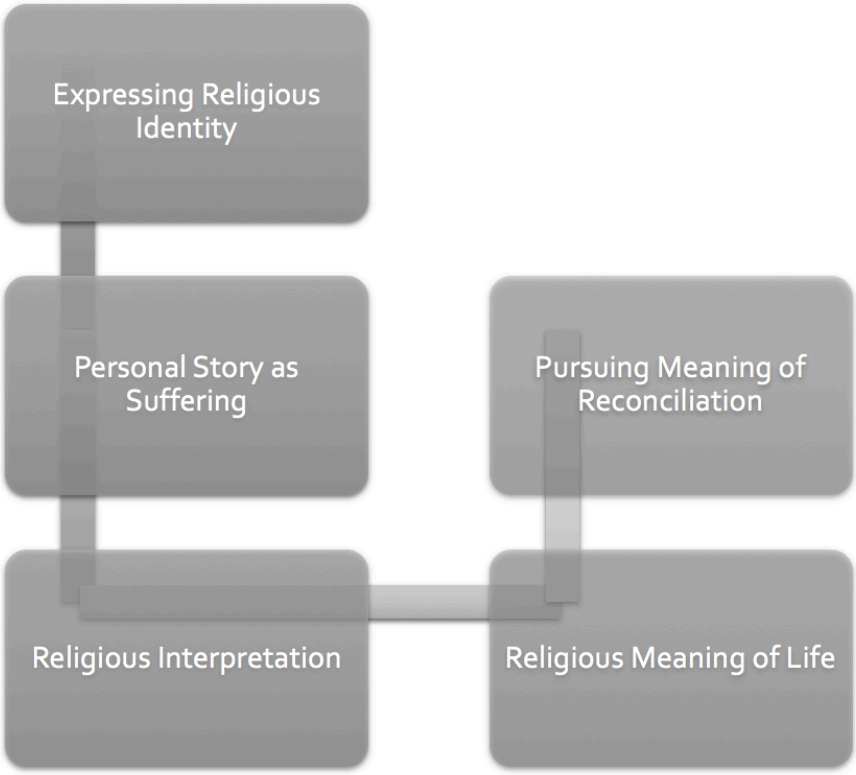


Figure 8.1. Narrative Structure and the Emergence of Meaning 3

This life story pattern can be found in all five participants' autobiographical narratives. Kim Gye-Soon's story epitomizes this form of narrative structure. Kim started telling her life story by saying that she was nominated as a deaconess and had a spiritual experience, both of which are salient in affirming her Christian identity. Following the identification, she moved to stories of her father's death and experiences after the bereavement. Throughout her storytelling process, Kim spoke about herself with a redemptive image of a sufferer, explaining what happened in her life and how she overcame it with a Christian understanding of life. This narrative pattern was repeated three times. She concluded her story by talking about the need for forgiveness, concerning her suffering and a peaceful society. This structural narrative analysis may explain that Kim developed a meaning for forgiveness with the help of her narrative processing structured in this way.

#1

Yesterday, I was nominated as a deaconess with an honor at the service. The pastor of my church came from Seoul, and showed his appreciation of my involvement in church activities by coming here… It was last year, when the Lord even visited me

twice. He came to see me. I mean, I met him spiritually. How blessed am I. I can't forget about these moments, you know? I can feel, Jesus has intervened in my life. It was April last year. Um, it is like a turning point in my life. Truly so.

#2

My father' name is Kim Hak-Don. He was killed in the Bodo League massacre when I was… five, as I was born in 1946. At that time, my father was the head of the village we lived in. One day, I think it was June 23 1950, a few policemen came to my house and were looking for my father. And, my mom didn't know what was going on and told them his whereabouts... I saw my father walking between two policemen with shotguns on their shoulders. So I screamed and asked where he was going away. He said, 'Go home and wait there. I will come soon.' That was the last moment that I saw him.

#3

I don't know if I can tell you how I have lived properly. My mom remarried, and after my father's death my siblings and I felt uncomfortable with our relatives. I was working for other people' domestic needs in Seoul. Well, at that time, that job was not too bad – the pay was OK, because I had no other jobs. But actually, I was sent to those houses, to live there and work for them because I had no place to live in since I graduated from elementary school.

#4

Like I said, I don't know if I can tell you how I have miserably managed my life under poverty throughout my life until today. As I suffered a lot from hard work and other kinds of stressors resulting from my father's death, I started going to morning prayer meetings every day. I feel that God has been protecting me since my youth. Always. I received a book as a present from one of my church members, and what this book says is exactly my story. [*sobbing*] I… I cry a lot whenever I read this book. But I feel good. I feel that I have to have courage as a believer in Christ. I have only to focus on God, not caring about how other people look at my miserable life. He [*God*] has known very well about me and my life. He knew it. You know, there is an axiom that 'God had chosen me before I was conceived', right? I feel very relieved when I remember and contemplate that thought. I am wretched, and my life is broken, but He does not abandon me. I am very thankful for it. So, I decided to live for Him.

#5

> Therefore, I can tell you that I became stronger because of my father's story. God never gives you a perfect life. If he gave us a perfect life, we would probably abandon him. So, um… I managed my mind in this way. I tried to make sense of why this event happened, why my life is so miserably poor and so on. This book is like my autobiography. You wouldn't be able to understand how God perfectly guards you, without knowing what a life of suffering is like. My life proves this.

#6

> Of course, the past event was horrible. It was such a tragedy. However, we ought not to keep our anger and resentment towards our enemies permanently. We can't live with those emotions every day. We must redeem such feeling. We must forgive them. We are able to forgive those who killed my family, my brothers and sisters with God's guidance. We must follow His way. I mean, we have to make a society without wars and violence. We have to leave this country to the younger generations peacefully. The suffering must stop here. It's our business, not our descendants'. We must finish this suffering by forgiving our enemies.

In summary, the five victims' emplotment is in the form of religious testimony, as can be seen from this example of Kim's abridged narrative structure as an example. Expressing Christian identity is an opening narrative gate leading to faithful interpretations of the following stories. By putting their Christian identity at the front of their life story, the participants seemed to aim to show how religious they are and to provide interpretations of the past events and their present life experiences in a religious manner. In so doing, the participants tried to build sympathy with the listener (the interviewer) and to give credibility about the following stories. For them, the reliability played a critical function to anchor religious interpretation to their suffering. Indeed, the five victims demonstrated a solid linkage between recounting their experiences and making redemptive meaning through a religious interpretation. As will be discussed in the thematic analysis, the respondents adopted some narratives of eschatology when they interpreted the world, the selfhood, and meaning of reconciliation. This narrative structure guided the tellers to pursue meaning of reconciliation religiously.

Utilization of Religious Rhetoric of Suffering

Another structural feature of autobiographical stories of the five victims was the utilization of religious rhetoric in expressing their suffering. In chapter 5, I described that rhetoric is linguistic techniques that one uses to deliver intended meaning effectively. By using different skills, the tellers and writers are able to give listeners and readers an efficient impression of what they describe in their stories. For the linguistic function, the five victims in this study made use of religious rhetoric in order to describe their suffering, thus making a religious genre of autobiography. They often adopted the techniques of simile, parallelism, and metaphor in portraying who they are and how they came to be in the midst of suffering and how they overcome it. To do so, some often brought the story of Jesus that tells that Jews betrayed and crucified him on the cross. Victims described their suffering resulting from civilian massacres and continued victimization as if they sympathize with and participate in the crucifixion of Christ. By juxtaposing two stories of suffering, they made sense of their suffering with the image of self-sacrifice just as Jesus embraced the suffering of crucifixion as atonement.

> Jesus Christ had the same suffering two thousand years ago in Palestine. (…) Of course, his physical suffering and torment were meant to be redeeming the world. His life has a redemptive meaning, for sure. What about my suffering? It can be understood this way, not as tough as his though. You know, my father was excluded by the people and killed at the hands of the dominant power because he had a different view. It was like Jesus' disobeying the rules.
>
> (Jung Byung-Doo)

> I think my life adversity is the same as the life of Jesus. Just as he suffered a lot on the cross for us, I also suffered throughout my entire life. Well, I don't say that we have the same level of suffering, but I just say that I am able to understand him and *vice versa*.
>
> (Kim Gye-Soon)

Park Chi-Yong compares his life story with that of Joseph in the old testament. Although his life has been full of hardships, he said that he was able to overcome all of the challenges by thinking of good examples in the Bible. He referenced a biblical figure who is an icon of a hard yet successful life to present some commonalities between his story and the biblical story. These understandings enabled victims to imitate the examples of religious figures, leading them to participate in the

divine suffering with their own experience and renew the way of seeing their suffering.

> Joseph's story in Egypt particularly inspired me - the story that Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and became the second most powerful man in Egypt as a Hebrew. Well, I love this story. It may sound absurd and ridiculous, but I have been thinking about myself and my life in relation to Joseph's story. [*raising his voice*] We are very similar! As he trusted God while suffering and enduring difficulties, I also did the same! I really think my story is identical to his. I could overcome negative emotions from the bereavement and resentment to think in this way. I still think this way. It's a sort of a spiritual reference.

Religious metaphor and analogy also played a role. Whereas parallelism allowed victims to reflect on how to view their suffering, victims used some biblical metaphors and analogies when they pursued literary meaning of suffering. By the literary meaning, victims developed their insight into suffering and its deep meaning. For example, Choi Kyun-Sik used the metaphor of 'a grain of wheat' in the Gospel of John to interpret his father's death as a meaningful event. He described how his father was arrested, and he has been struggling to understand why that event happened to him. After expressing that he relied extensively on religious understanding of the event, he confessed that his father's death has a redemptive meaning. He related that just as a grain of wheat produces things, his father and his life can produce good things. In this way, metaphor gave him the opportunity to generate a meaning that his life is still worthwhile.

> Because my father died in such a way… I feel like…. In the new testament, the Gospel of John says that "Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal." I think that is so true. You see? I understand, my father is a grain of wheat, described in the gospel.

Another rhetorical device that victims commonly used was apophasis. The Meriam-Webster English dictionary defines this term as a rhetorical style that raises an issue by not mentioning it. In a theological sense, apophasis means describing God by claiming what God is not.[563] It is an

[563] Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 6 edition (Chichester, West Sussex ; Malden, MA: Wiley-

ironic approach to describe a subject with an agnostic or negative attitude. Victims in this analysis expressed their suffering apophatically. That is to say, when victims aspired to tell their stories but felt unable to do so, they used apophasis. Geddes explains this as a double bind dilemma, which refers to the fact that victims or survivors feel compelled to speak out but cannot properly do so because of their suffering and the limitations of human language to express mass atrocities adequately.[564] Participants in this study also displayed this dilemma in expressing their stories and emotions in a dialectic way. For example, some participant demonstrated this.

> I don't know why this happened to me. What can I say? Why my father? [*Sobbing*] I don't know what to do more… But only God understands me. That is enough.
>
> (Jung Chan-Ae)

> People cannot tell this kind of story appropriately. I have tried to remember correctly and see my father… [*pause*] Uh… I was living as a minister my entire life. I used to preach every day, so I speak well. But, as to my father's story, I feel unable to do it.
>
> (Park Chi-Yong)

The five victims' autobiographical narratives are full of different types of religious rhetoric. In particular, they adopted these linguistic techniques to depict their suffering and how they understand themselves as people who struggle with life challenges as a result of civilian massacres. As will be addressed in the next section, victims' usage of such rhetoric is related to their self-description as redemptive sufferers. By comparing themselves with religious figures who also suffered from life challenges or by borrowing metaphors that can substitute for their inexplicable emotions, they tended to express who they are and how they overcome their suffering. This rhetoric played as a useful device to portray their self-image as redemptive sufferers and gave victims interpretative moments in their suffering. It also guided victims to the creation of some meaning of reconciliation in a redemptive way.

Blackwell, 2016); Charles M. Stang, 'Being Neither Oneself Nor Someone Else': The Apophatic Anthropology of Dionysius the Areopagite', in *Apophatic Bodies: Negative Theology, Incarnation and Relationality*, ed. Chris Boesel and Catherine Keller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 59–78.

[564] Jennifer L. Geddes, 'Religious Rhetoric in Responses to Atrocity', in *The Religious in Responses to Mass Atrocity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Thomas Brudholm and Thomas Cushman (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 21–37.

Summary of the Analysis

The structural analysis of this chapter has shown that the five respondents' autobiographical narratives are equivalent to religious testimony. Based on this form, they used diverse religious rhetoric to express their suffering as a result of the violent events and further victimization. The religious form of storytelling allowed victims to understand and describe their life of suffering in a religious manner. They told of their suffering through the lens of religious belief that is expressed through diverse rhetoric, and therefore put their emotions emerging from bereavement and suppression both in an apophatic and redemptive way. This way of telling provided the victims with a realization that they are religious interpreters who religiously understand their lives after civilian massacres. It underlines that victims have a strong tendency to rely on religious narratives to overcome their inexplicable suffering on them. Moreover, this sort of autobiographical storytelling led victims to think about and develop meaning of reconciliation. In appraising the meaning of reconciliation, the five victims demonstrated religious senses of reconciliation rooted in religious narratives. Therefore, although they shared some meaning and the need for reconciliation with other victims, their internal justification of it was distinctively grounded in the religious way of narrative reasoning.

8.3 Investigating Narrative Themes

Following the structural analysis, this section scrutinizes themes emerging from the narrative data. The thematic analysis in this study focuses on (1) how victims describe their suffering, (2) how they recognize themselves, and (3) therefore developing meaning of reconciliation. For this purpose, this chapter particularly examines what sense of reconciliation emerges from victims' narrative processing of self-recognition and meaning-making in concert with religious narratives. Research questions will be addressed with this structural examination.

As an overview, the thematic analysis of this chapter has found that autobiographical narratives of those who identify themselves as Christians were by and large associated with one of Christian doctrines, 'eschatology'. That is, Christian victims in this study showed that they tended to rely on narratives of eschatological worldviews, history and human suffering that provide a fundamental sense of human life when they composed their storylines out of violent events. Composing their life stories with an eschatological perspective, victims expressed how they see the world around them and who they are, and found a way to make sense of what has happened to them and their insufferable experience, thereby developing meaning of reconciliation. The contents of victims' stories, thus, comprised of eschatology-laden narratives.

The term eschatology refers to the last thing or the end of all things in historical time.[565] Although it involves multi-layered meanings and aspects in different religious traditions,[566] Christian theologians generally understand this term to describe an apocalyptic vision of the kingdom of God. Eschatology explains that the ultimate goal of human history is completed in the kingdom of God which is 'already here on earth' but 'not yet' fully accomplished.[567] While every creature is ontologically born in the physical and temporal world and experiences God's presence in human history, all is destined to wait for the final redemption from God via his righteous judgement. Eschatology, thus, implies a suspension of God's final judgement in human time (*chronos χρόνος*), which will be done in divine time (*kairos καιρός*). Although it is an irony of the presence of the Kingdom of God which is between 'already here' and 'not here yet', it encourages believers to live with the apocalyptic hope that envisions that God is at present in the physical world and fully realizes his world at the end of human history, coming shortly.[568] Human beings, then, live in finite time and space and yearn for an infinite hope, believing in a fulfilment of their deepest human aspirations beyond this earthly life.[569] Thus, believers are required to live this worldly life eschatologically, settling down on the earth yet looking forward to the advent of God's kingdom. The Protestant theologian, Jürgen Moltmann stated that the waiting is the hope for humans because God will judge what is right and wrong to realize his justice at the end of the day.[570] This hope is connected to the kingdom of God, in which the perfect sense of peace and justice is going to be accomplished.[571] In this sense, eschatology provides a distinct response to human predicament and crisis, leading people in anxiety and despair to a futuristic hope.

Eschatology is a hopeful vision for victims and survivors of violent and traumatic events. Christian theologians have noted that victims and survivors of violent events tend to view their suffering and traumatic memories in the frame of the eschatological understanding of human history and suffering.[572] From the perspective of eschatology, victims' sorrow and desire in the unacceptable reality will be known to God and the earthly system that suppresses them will be subverted in

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[565] Gerhard Sauter, 'Protestant Theology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry L. Walls (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 248–62.This thesis discusses eschatology in the view of protestant theology as all of the five participants are protestants. However, the notion of eschatology emerges in different Christian denominations and other world religions. For this, see other chapters in Jerry L. Walls, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[566] For the aspects of eschatology in different religion, see Jerry L. Walls (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*.

[567] Hans Schwarz, *Eschatology* (Cambridge: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000); Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1996); Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, trans. J. W. Leitch, 2nd ed. (Canterbury: SCM Press, 2002).

[568] Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*; Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*.

[569] Wolfhart Pannenberg, 'The Task of Christian Eschatology', in *The Last Thing: Biblical & Theological Perspectives on Eschatology*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 1–13, 2.

[570] Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*.

[571] Pannenberg, 'The Task of Christian Eschatology'.

[572] Cynthia Hess, *Sites of Violence, Sites of Grace: Christian Nonviolence and the Traumatized Self* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2009).

God's kingdom and his righteousness. With the apocalyptic vision, victims may reshape the view of the world around them, and who they are and how they came to be in the middle of pain.[573] Crucially, the five participants in this study corresponded to the eschatological understanding of life, history, and human suffering in their practices of storytelling. Their narratives of suffering and self-recognition were deeply ingrained in the eschatological interpretation, and it guided victims to think of reconciliation.

To outline analyzed themes, victims first addressed their view of the world in the light of the distinction between good and evil, and trust in divine providence for the world in which they live. After addressing this particular religious worldview, did victims describe their suffering as a result of their experience of civilian massacres and continued victimization, in an attempt to interpret why those events occurred. In identifying themselves in the physical world, they recognized themselves as children of God who are chosen by the divine plan. In this understanding, suffering is not necessarily a bad thing, but can play a redemptive function to serve a reconciled society. By narrating perseverance in such redemptive suffering, victims portrayed themselves as divine messengers in advancing reconciliation, providing meaning to it. These stages of narrative processing are told in the form of a religious testimony with religious rhetoric as shown above.

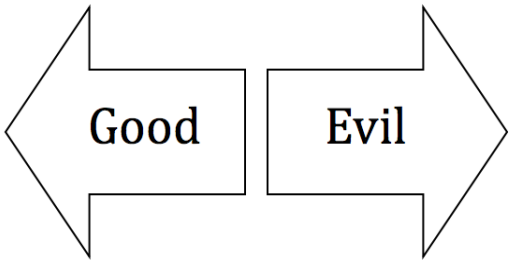
[573] Hess. Oak Sung-Deuk pointed out that eschatology and eschatological interpretation in Korean society can be traced back several hundred years. According to him, early dynasties and political leaders in Korea utilized apocryphal prophecy when they justified regime changes. To establish a new dynasty, those leaders propagandized people with prophetic teachings. Those prophecies were recorded in Chŏnggam-nok, a combination of prophetic tracts. Oak goes on to argue that Tonghak, one of the Korean traditional religions, epitomizes an example of prophetic apocalypses, expecting the regime change in the Chosen dynasty with the prophetic interpretation. The religious leaders preached that Tonghak followers would keep peaceful lives by the help of Tianzhu [*the Heavenly Lord*] whereas non-followers shall not. He explained that these kind of prophecies were already present in Korean society, and were compatible with Roman Catholic's and protestants' messianic eschatology. Therefore, the Christian sense of eschatology is not new to the Korean people and society. See Sung-Deuk Oak, *The Making of Korean Christianity: Protestant Encounters with Korean Religions 1876-1915* (Texas: Baylor University Press, 2013).
It is also salient to note the role of Christian eschatology in modern Korean history. Scholars argue, Christianity in Korea, in its painful history throughout modern time including the Japanese colonial era and a long period of autocratic regimes, has responded to the unjust social situations and people's suffering, by giving people hope for the future. While playing as a social device to defend the suppressed, Christian leaders provided people in suppression with apocalyptic vision throughout historical hardships; thus eschatological messages. As an example, an early Christian minister and a national leader, Gil Seon-Ju's eschatological revival movement in the 1920-1930s was a nationwide movement designed to resist the Japanese colonial regime, providing people with an apocalyptic vision of new world. His movement did not only influence Christians but also non-believers so that it mobilized people's objection to the Shinto Shrine services at the end of 1930s. His eschatological messages developed the Korean people' mind of resistance and endurance, waiting for the independence, which was understood as the new world for the people. For more discussion, see Yu-Joon Kim, 'Gil Seon-Ju on the Eschatological Revival Movements in the 1920-30s', *University and Mission* 31 (2016): 165–98; Young Hoon Lee, 'Korean Presbyterianism and Futuristic Kingdom: The Premillennial Eschatology of the Korean Presbyterian Church with Respect to Its Missionary Movement, 1884–1945' (Mississippi, Reformed Theological Seminary, 2008); Ung-Kyu Pak, 'From Fear to Hope: The Shaping of Premillennialism in Korea, 1883-1945' (Philadelphia, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1999).

Eschatological narratives govern victims' personal life stories. The narratives emerge when victims consciously reflect on what has happened in the past and try to account for the existential meaning of the world around them. Because the eschatological mind provides victims with the apocalyptic vision of the world,[574] they envisage a new world, relying on the visionary hope. This deeply motivates victims' narratives who are suppressed yet hope for the new future. The five victims reported two kinds of world understandings: the distinction between good and evil and divine providence. By locating themselves at the center of the world in-between good and evil, victims understood where they belong and what they ought to do in the physical world. Moreover, by trusting divine providence over time, victims linked their life to good and severed links with evil, in order to defend the existential experience of the secular life that they have experienced. In narrating these world understandings which are based upon the eschatological approach to the world and human history, victims addressed their Christian identity in order to develop a spiritual connection between themselves and God.

Adopting the Distinction between Good and Evil

One of the most distinctive narrative themes of the five victims is that they have a solid worldview which is divided between good and evil. The binary perspective comes from a cosmic understanding that religious people adopt to validate their existence in time and space. This particular Christian approach to the world is the same as Eliade's analogy, referring to the distinction between the sacred and the profane.[575] According to Eliade, because "religious people always believe that there is an absolute reality, the sacred, which transcends this world but manifests itself in this world", they distinguish the world of the sacred from that of the profane, and try to belong to the sacred.[576] Christians also embrace this binary cosmic understanding; that is eschatology. Events in this world belong to the evil power; however there is also the good power to which Christians belong. It refers to the eschatological view on the world, wherein God comes and judges good and evil at the end of the day. By relying on the distinction, Christians attempts to maintain the good side.

[574] Schwarz, *Eschatology*; Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*.
[575] Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred & The Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: A Harvest Book, 1987).
[576] Ibid, 202.



From this point of view, the five research participants commonly expressed this worldview in explaining their life experiences of victimization and suffering retrospectively. This approach provides them with an interpretative frame to make sense of mass killing and their present suffering. By formulating their narratives in this way, victims described what happened to their family and to themselves during and after the war as events belonging to evil, while the deceased and themselves, as victims of evil power exercising injustice in this world, belong to good. Three participants clearly stated this point of view.

> This world is divided between good and evil. Um… what happened to my father is an event of this world, I mean, the evil part. If I was a non-believer, I wouldn't have been able to understand why the event to my father happened. But as a believer, I can understand it spiritually. If I don't understand about my father and my life in this way, I wouldn't have a… a proper frame to interpret and accept these events happening to me. It would be groundless. Indeed, others [*victims*] still feel embittered. They don't know how to understand and accept this. I have tried to tell stories about my father's death and my family's and my life thereafter in a religious way. Otherwise, I couldn't have accepted it at all! Why me? Why me? I would have thought like 'Is that my destiny?' So, there are no other ways to understand this, but only in the religious manner.
>
> (Choi Kyun-Sik)

> I am an undereducated person. I have led a poor and miserable life if others ask me. But I am uh... truly relieved by the fact that I am a Christian, because… personally speaking, I have different eyes in my life. I think, my father's death belongs to evil powers of this world. It killed my father. As a Christian, I dwell in the sphere of the good. I mean, I see this episode through the lens of good and evil.
>
> (Kim Gye-Soon)

> We Christians should think of life events in the light of what God, the ultimate good, says to us. Although we are currently in this world, we must believe that this suffering from the evil power will be redeemed after all.
>
> (Jung Byung-Doo)

The dichotomy between good and evil was clearly stated in these three participants' narratives. When narrating, victims adopted a viewpoint that the past event belongs to the evil power which is opposite to the good, whereas victims reside in the territory of the good. Two other participants provided more sophisticated explanations of this in relation to eschatology. In particular, Park Chi-Yong expressed an eschatological understanding of history after addressing his identity as a pastor, in a calm way of speaking. He understood that the evil power sacrificed his father's death and his life, but at the same time, he believes that they belong to the good.

> I was too young to fathom the past events in the right way. (…) Now I do understand this matter in the angle of the Bible because I am a pastor. Spiritually speaking, this world is the world of darkness. When we see the unfolding of world history… uh… it says that although almighty God reveals himself, the world does not see his presence and intervention. He shows his goodwill to the world, but this world is obsessed with evil, reproducing evil deed and injustice… In the book of Revelation in the Bible, we can read many stories about disorder and disasters. History has an ever-present confrontation between the good and evil blocs, doesn't it? Not only Korean history, but also world history, has been under the evil power, and that is why God and his people struggle from it. We, the good people, suffer a lot because we belong to God and they belong to the evil... What I want to say is that this world is governed by God's plan to redeem the evil power after all. They exist under his willingness… Reflecting on my experience and my father's death, I think, this is right.

Another participant, Jung Chan-Ae, held a similar point of view. Her narratives were more associated with the kingdom of God, which is the ultimate model of the world without death and sorrow. From this view, Jung expressed a hope for the resurrection of the dead, her father, according to the Biblical narratives. She poignantly stated this hope.

> In this world, there is much evil power. God will remove that power because he is goodness itself. We cannot do that. I think he is working on it, and after that, a

> peaceful world will come. Heaven on earth. There will be only good things and people will love each other… Regardless of age and gender, in God' Kingdom, brothers and sisters gather together, harmonious because, in his [God's] eyes, we are all the same. There will be no bad and good people. This world must be like this as early as possible… I think it is in Romans. In Romans, it says that God will redeem and resurrect those who died. He revives all the dead at the end of the day. What I want to see is that at the end of the day, I will see my father. I can meet with my father. My poor father... [*sobbin*g] He will also resurrect. He will certainly do so. That is my hope. I look forward to it.

In this manner, victims who are Christians tended to understand their suffering and victimization as a part and outcome of the evil power exercised in human history. In their narratives, the power is described in negative terms, such as 'the world of darkness', and this perception implies that the world and its history have been under the strong influence of the evil power, making them victims. Thus, victimization and suffering originated not merely from a particular power as a specific time, but they have a metaphysical quality that needs to be religiously interpreted. As victims think that their suffering belongs to the evil part, they said they wait for God's redemption of their pain and need to act for the redemption in this world at the same time. This perspective led victims to conceive the necessity of reconciliation in human life to accomplish a good world.

Trusting Divine Providence

Based on the good and evil dichotomy, victims presented some narratives of a worldview that can be theologically interpreted as 'providence of God' or 'divine providence'. The term 'divine providence' refers to God's intervention into the human world with divine plans and purposes.[577] It is a Christian teaching that explains that God, the omnipotent being, knows, makes plans, and intervenes in human history as well as people's everyday lives to save those who know him and are suppressed by the evil power in this life.[578] God reveals Himself and provides what people need, according to His purposes and willingness to redeem the world.

Victims articulated their trust in God's plans and guidance in varying degrees. Their reliance on narratives of divine providence derive from the binary worldview and the realization of the

[577] Paul Helm, *The Providence of God: Contours of Christian Theology* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1994).
[578] Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*; Richard Swinburne, *Providence and the Problem of Evil* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

domination of the evil power at present. Victims showed a high level of confidence in God' plans and guidance throughout history and their ordinary lives. In doing so, as Hess argues, victims develop their Christian identity and views on the world around them.[579] Park Chi-Yong and Choi Kyun-Sik stated God's choice and plan in their lives. While both struggled with the existential question of 'Why me?', they expressed their trust in God's providence that planed and chosen them, which lead them to be resilient, with positive conclusions for their lives.

> I believe that I am a victim of the evil power. But still, I am unable to answer the question, why me? My father was killed, and my life is too difficult. Why? Why? I used to blame God so much. In hindsight, I have thought of the 'why' question a lot. Now I see myself as a wounded person. I have deep empathy for myself and my life… In hindsight, God planned me. He has chosen me in this way. I appreciate this fact. In this way, I console myself. I was deadly lonely. I have felt isolated my entire life. It feels like the whole world is disconnected from me. But God's inexplicable providence enabled me to link myself to the world again. It gave me the means to understand the whole situation I have experienced through my entire life. So like the hymn, 'I was blind but now I see', this Christian belief healed me in such a complex emotion, resentment, and trauma, and I now appreciate my life. I don't complain any longer. I don't blame anyone.
>
> (Park Chi-Yong)

Choi Kyun-Sik had a similar point of view. Using the rhetoric of repetition, he made sense of his worldly suffering as having a purpose under God's guidance. He repeated this logic several times in his narrative and concluded his life story by stating 'eternal life' and 'God gives us better things'. These religious narratives encouraged him to wrap up his life story positively.

> Looking back on my life course as a whole, I have to confess that God has led me. He has been driving me somewhere. So I repeat, 'don't despair' or 'restore superiority' for myself… My life was a war. I had to survive the war. I went through too many hardships. You cannot imagine. So, I have been trying to be ambitious, brave, and confident. I studied very hard not to be fall behind others. This sort of lifestyle formed my personality. Hence… I often say that the conclusion of our lives is eternal life. Everything is in vain without eternal life. Money, education, reputation… are no use.

[579] Hess, *Sites of Violence, Sites of Grace*.

> We need to know this. The assurance of eternal life!
>
> …
>
> I was often deflated throughout my youth. Ah… I felt humiliated! But I know that… um… God gives us better things. That is true. If… if my living conditions were good, I wouldn't be able to believe that. But I do. He [God] often asks me 'What's better?' So I consciously ask myself that question. Now I realize, 'ah, His plan for my life is bigger than I thought.' When we are in a situation of hardships, we don't realize this fact. But human beings are always slow to understand this. In hindsight, we can see what's really happened and why. Me too. I realized that God is a helping hand for me later on.

Kim Gye-Soon felt relieved when she expressed her suffering and her trust in divine providence. Her entire narrative was focused on how much she is blessed, despite her painful experiences and memories. The moment he noted the fact that God knows her life in suffering was emotional, and she seemed to experience the emotion of catharsis.[580] Going through some emotional stages, she stated, 'My life is okay now'.

> Retrospectively, God knew where I was at every moment. He was with me at every moment of my suffering. When I think of my life, I see that it is under His plan. At time of hardships, I couldn't see that he was working for me, but I see that he was always there… I sometimes ask myself what if I was not a Christian, whether I would still be alive and be able to support my family. Well, hardship was overwhelming me, so that I couldn't do anything… [*raising voice*] Nothing was helpful, seriously, but God gave me some power to survive this whole situation. All the discrimination and poverty… Understanding was not possible. I just couldn't describe it. A very unfair life. I had no one to rely on, but only God…. Slowly I started disconnecting from people in the world, and decided to devote my life to living for God only. Now I regard God as my father. I appreciate His guidance just as I did my father's did for me when he was still alive. My life is now okay, and I desire nothing.
>
> (Kim Gye-Soon)

[580] See Guthrey, *Victim Healing and Truth Commissions*.

Victims' narratives on divine providence are deeply rooted in their eschatological mind. When victims discern the world in the frame of good and evil and rely on divine providence, they address an emotion and a belief that the divinity knows their life of suffering. This belief appeared throughout their narratives, and it had a positive function of allowing victims not only to fathom why the violent event happened to them and how to understand it, but also to keep calm in the worldly life. That is, the good and evil dichotomy provided victims with an outline of human life and events in relation to their experience, and divine providence promoted a trusted awareness that their lives are predestined and lead to a purposeful destination. Although each informant had different levels of the binary worldview and trust in divine providence, these certainly played a crucial role in victims' narratives. These narratives, moreover, stimulated victims' self-recognition.

Self-Recognition: Who am I in the midst of worldly suffering?

Victims' self-recognition was one of the core analytical points of this study. By looking at victims' narrative configuration of explaining who they are in the midst of suffering resulting from civilian massacres and continued victimization, I anticipated that victims can have a subjective interpretation of reconciliation. For religious people, self-recognition is closely linked to religious worldview. The thematic analysis found out that five Christian victims described who they are with reference to the aforementioned eschatological worldviews. Two themes emerged: children of God and redemptive sufferer. These self-images played a critical role in establishing a fertile ground to generate redemptive meaning for reconciliation, as will be discussed in the next section.

Children of God

The five victims understood that they are children of God. The theme of children of God emerged when they told of how they lived without their parents who died in the war. Because victims lost chances to form their identity and develop self-esteem due to the loss of their parents at an early age by the event of civilian mass killing, they grew up without parental role models. Instead, they were suppressed by longstanding social stigmatization. Even their relatives refused to accept them because they were labelled communists. These experiences led victims to think that the world had betrayed them. These negative experiences were expressed in terms such as 'deflated' or 'humiliated'. They described that God is the only parent for them, who knows them and calls them his children. Victims tended to juxtapose the world, which abandoned them, with God, who

knows their suffering and accepts them as His children. In asserting this comparison, they overcame the sense of social abandonment as a form of discrimination, and enhanced who they are in a religious manner. Indeed, victims spoke of the children of God theme more often than the victim theme.

Kim Gye-Soon told of how she was severely struggling with her identity until her forties as a result of her father's death. Yet, she became assured of who she is with the realization of God's providence.

> Nonetheless, I am delighted because God has called me as one of his children. As far as I know, it was… in the Gospel of John. In John, Jesus says, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." [*John 16:33*] It is apparent that I have been betrayed by this world. The state abandoned us. Even my relatives did not like us, keeping their distance from my siblings and me. We are all betrayed… We and I are like nothing in this world… But I believe that God called me and regards me as his daughter. I am very relieved when I think this way.

Both Jung Chan-Ae and Jung Byung-Doo had similar narratives. Jung Chan-Ae thought of God as her father because she pined for her real father, whereas Jung Byung-Doo expressed the same self-recognition based on his Christian belief. Regardless of the different motivations of this theme of self-recognition, the religious narratives have the positive function for victims of unpacking their emotional burden as a result of the loss of their parents.

> I see myself as God's daughter. Since my father died, I have always longed for him. In my youth, I was very jealous of my friends who had their fathers… Just as we call God as our heavenly father, I called Him my father. I really believe that He is my father and I am his child. This gives me the joy in life.
>
> (Jung Chang-Ae)

> I feel fortunate out of all these episodes that my family has maintained its Christian belief. My father, despite the unjust killing, established the church with his belief, and I have inherited his belief. Knowing and believing that God treats me as His child consoles me in my suffering. It enhances my self-esteem and heals my wounded heart… [*pause*] That I am his child is an undeniable fact.

(Jung Byung-Doo)

Redemptive Sufferer

Another narrative of self-recognition is that of the redemptive sufferer. Victims' descriptions of themselves as children of God expanded to the eschatological view on suffering, which specifies that the evil power necessarily exists in the world, in order to explain God's presence, the ultimate good. In this sense, victims described how suffering is not merely a human artefact triggered by human injustice, but rather has a metaphysical aspect. While victims recognized themselves first as children of God, they were encouraged to understand that their suffering has a redemptive meaning. Pain is an essential element of this world, and God addresses his righteousness by redeeming the sufferer with his plan and for his purpose. In this respect, victims expressed that they are willing to bear the suffering for their redemption.

> This hard life cannot be futile. There is no meaningless suffering. Especially, sufferings that Christians experience produce something. Something for the good. Such is mine. God knows how much I have suffered in this world. Therefore, I keep enduring.
>
> (Park Chi-Yong)

> Therefore, I can tell you that I became stronger because of my father's story. God never gives you a perfect life. If he gave us a perfect life, we would probably leave him. So, um… I managed my mind in this way. I tried to make sense of why this event happened, why my life is so miserably poor and so on. This book is like my autobiography. You won't be able to understand how God perfectly guards you, without knowing what a life of suffering is like. My life proves this.
>
> (Kim Gye-Soon)

> What is very important when I look back on my father's death and my life is that my life is eh… designed for something. I don't know what that is, but God knows it because He made this life. I can withstand pains in my life.
>
> (Jung Byung-Doo)

Not every victim articulated that their suffering has a redemptive meaning. However, Christian

victims in this study shared a sense of it having a good purpose by God, and therefore they can endure it for his righteousness to be accomplished. Their acceptance of this perspective was that they assume it is their fate in this life. Nonetheless, they still held the belief that their life suffering contributes to righteous ends. This aspect is most elaborated in Choi Kyun-Sik's narratives in which he tried to discover the meaning of his life by using the biblical metaphor, 'the grain of wheat', which expects to produce right things. Through this narrative of self-recognition, he appreciated his life of suffering.

> Looking at my life retrospectively, myself is that… eh… resentment, grief, and all the bitterness are not useless. Every moment is valuable. There is no memory to throw away…. [*sigh*]… I thank God. If I may say it in English, it's like "sweet are the uses of adversity." Why sweet here? It's an irony! Indeed, the value of adversities is high! In conclusion, I believe that God planned this life to train me. He did for me on purpose. I appreciate his plan very much these days. This is how I understand my father's story and my life. A frame of seeing my world.
>
> …
>
> I can be here by God's mercy. All events I experienced were practices. He prepared for me. In hindsight, adversities teach important lessons. As the Bible says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word" [*Psalms: 119.67*] I mean adversities. The effect of adversity is huge. I believe that my father was a grain of wheat that sprouts and reproduces many results. My life is also the grain. My life and my story can function as a grain of wheat for society, seeking justice and laws. Actually, I am proud of myself, because of the fact that I have been doing well, overcoming all the challenges.

This awareness of the self and suffering, as noted above, were expressed with diverse religious rhetoric. Using the divine image of suffering such as the crucifixion of Christ, victims seemed to have an empathy with divine suffering and at the same time reflected on their suffering in the earthly life. In this way, victims realized who they are in the midst of suffering and evaluated the meaning of it and with confessional tones. By doing so, they linked their wounded self-images emerging from their experiences of suffering to religious sentiments of 'children of God' and 'redemptive sufferer'. These religious self-images can be evaluated as representations of what the victims want to be as religious people who suffer in the present time. Because the dichotomic worldview and trust in divine providence give victims a sense that they do not belong to the evil

world which is temporal, but to the world that God redeems with his righteousness, victims portray who they are in a redemptive way. That is to say, the eschatological worldview encouraged victims to describe themselves in line with the worldview. In so doing, they maintain a consistency between the world eschatologically perceived and the self, who is suffering now, yet waiting for redemption. Importantly, this sense of self-recognition allowed the victims to think of what they have to do in the worldly life. Their views on reconciliation are deeply linked to their religious processing of the world and the self.

Narrative Meaning of Reconciliation

The five victims' narrative processing of the worldview and self-recognition in the midst of worldly suffering proved that the eschatological narratives to the world, history, and suffering compose the overall content of their autobiographical narratives, providing a thematic coherence. Through the coherent narrative processing of understanding the world and the self in the aftermath of the violent event and ensuing life of suffering, victims developed and appraised some meaning of reconciliation in society. Importantly, while the internalization of the religious narratives guided victims to generate meaning of reconciliation, victims reflected religious values of reconciliation. As religious narratives transmit values to the autobiographical authors, they showed their engagement with the religious values of reconciliation. However, victims did not just embrace the religious sentiments of reconciliation but instead interpreted and evaluated them subjectively. Meanings of reconciliation generally appeared in line with the eschatology approach.

Victims stated three meanings of reconciliation: justice, forgiveness, and trust for the future. Although physical and mental suffering initially seemed to be the primary motivation for them to pursue and develop these meanings, the meanings are more grounded in the victims' religious narratives. In particular, the eschatological understanding of the world, history, and suffering guided them to envisage the kingdom of God in the present world. Because victims perceived themselves not only as children of God but also as redemptive sufferers, they generated meaning for reconciliation as messengers of the kingdom of God. Despite this shared understanding, their vision of a reconciled society differed, as shown below.

Justice heals the dark history

The first meaning that victims provided is reconciliation in light of historical and social justice. Victims understand that their experience of violation and suffering are historical and social. For

them, reconciliation is a device for promoting justice that transforms the historical wrongs and social injustice; both of them are the origin of their suffering. Importantly, this type of meaning for reconciliation was expressed in victims' autobiographical narratives, realizing God's righteousness in this worldly life. Victims believe that justice, as a critical part of God's righteousness, heals the events of dark history as well as ongoing social injustice.

First, reconciliation needs the historical sense of justice that addresses and corrects historical wrongs. The reconciling process between perpetrators and victims in the case of a gross violation of human rights and war crimes begins with a complete investigation of unjust past actions.[581] When the truth about the past wrongs is disclosed, perpetrators ought to be held responsible for their conduct and victims should be acknowledged and eligible for redress of an historical injustice. These attempts to carry out justice have the corrective or restorative function of redeeming historical wrongs.[582] Park Chi-Yong concluded his life story by claiming the need for reconciliation from the perspective of historical justice. His sentiment came from the eschatological view of the dark history and God's economy of redemption, as seen above. In other words, human history, which is full of sorrow and wounds, awaits the kingdom of God, and to that end, Christians must act to accomplish his righteousness in human history. In this view, the history of Korea has been led by an evil power, and innocent victims like his father and himself existed, and historical wounds ought to be redeemed so as to satisfy God's righteousness. This occurs when the evil power acknowledges their wrongs and apologizes to the wronged party. In this perspective, Park stated that justice redeems dark history, and this process of redemption by historical justice is the fundamental condition of reconciliation in Korea.

> Human history and politics exist to accomplish God's righteousness. When we see the story of Abraham in the book of Genesis, what God planned for Abraham was to realize his righteousness through the history of the Hebrews. This theme is repeated throughout the Old Testament. What the scripture says is that if the Israelis follow God's commandments in the right way, they are blessed, and if they don't… the same as this country. We must follow God's way. His righteousness and justice must flow like a river through people. But, um, too many people died in the war innocently. People like my father were killed meaninglessly for the evil power… I don't know why this kind of event happened and why hundreds of thousands of innocent people died. Why should it have been this way? I don't know why God from above kept silent when we suffer! I have no answer to these questions. But what is certain is that humans' experience and the meaning of life is in line with His plan, as I said. I mean in his

[581] Teitel, *Transitional Justice*; Barkan, 'Introduction'
[582] Teitel; Barkan, 'Historical Reconciliation.

righteousness and justice.

Nonetheless, he admitted an inability to understand and trusted in God's providence in his life and history. From this point of view, he asserted that reconciliation is his task as a Christian, although he did not precisely define what reconciliation means. His autobiographical meaning of reconciliation shows his inner conflict between his inability to understand and his reliance on God's providence. Reconciliation, for him, is to redeem the legacies of civilian massacres and continued victimization that he experienced.

> What I want to say, after all this, is that history is a confrontation between good and evil as I told earlier, and the fact that my family was victimized is an example of victimization by the evil power. So then, what can and should I do as a Christian? I would say, we should do something to realize God's justice. I mean, we must correct the historical wrongs that were performed by the evil power. My life was miserable and so were those of other victims. I don't understand all this. But, not only to overcome those pains and but also to bring dark history to an end, we must correct the historical wrongs. That is fundamental. We need reconciliation. I am not sure if it is the right term, but if it is right, I would say that reconciling with the evil past is only possible when the historical wrongs are redeemed. And, we have to work for it with our wounded hearts and souls.

Choi Kyun-Sik elaborated this aspect in the light of social justice. He said that to redeem the wounded history, promoting social justice by revealing the truth is important. While recalling the past historical events and his experience of victimization, he described justice as a remedy for the wounded society coming from its violent past.

> You know, human bodies do not function properly when we are infected by bacteria. When we are sick, we don't feel the same as when we aren't. Society is like a human organism, I mean the human body. What happened in the past is a sort of bacteria in society. So, if we do not remove it by revealing the truth, we will keep suffering. Let me remind you of Korean history. We experienced how dictator Park Chung-Hee had repressed citizens. But we learnt nothing from it. It resulted in Jeon Doo-Hwan's military regime. And what then? We had the president, Park Geun-Hye, the daughter of the previous dictator! As we've seen, it repeats over and over again unless we

properly come to terms with the unjust past. That is human history.

His concern for social justice through the truth is oriented to victims, the suppressed group in an unjust history. Because Korean society has witnessed long-standing discrimination and exclusion of the suppressed, this population will have the willingness when they are justly treated.

> What I feel thankful to the Roh and the present governments for its management of the state concerning the suppressed. Think about the heart of parents. They look after the weak children. The healthy ones are okay with minimal care. Society is the same. Attention should be given to those who are vulnerable and suppressed. That's equality. Finding the truth about the suppressed is the only way to take care of them. So, we all have to attend that the same injustice and violence does not occur… Reconciliation? Reconciliation can only come when those tasks are carefully done. Certainly. Our society must proceed this way. That is our [*victims'*] task.

In narrating this, Choi recognizes himself as an agent for social justice. That is to say, he expressed that he himself is the bridge between historical injustice and social justice. I asked him whether the term 'peace and reconciliation' may exclude those who have suffered from previous political regimes. He responded that:

> Ah that is so true. Something is wrong. I am saying that not because I am one of the victims, but because as I said, a good society should look back and heal the wounds from the past and look after the marginalized and so on. I believe that if justice and laws are guaranteed, there will be no problems in society. I think we victims are important at this point to… to… correct the society. Peace? We cannot talk about peace without justice… But an interesting thing is that the most basic element of human beings is error. Everyone makes mistakes. There is no perfect person. Me neither. I don't say that I am always right. I am selfish. I am greedy. So… when we say victims and think about our lives…, we mustn't describe our lives as a pure or um… entirely moral example. We are all the same. We are just imperfect human beings after all.

Their understanding of reconciliation is related to corrections of historical wrongs, that unjustly suppressed them. Although they did not provide a meaning for justice, they seemed to use the

term justice in a corrective sense. This is what Barkan developed regarding historical reconciliation: the ramifications of historical injustice need to be dealt with in the name of corrective justice.[583] Both participants evidenced this point of view. Further, they developed that historical justice can expand to social justice, which emancipates the suppressed. Choi presented this point of view, not using the term 'victims' but rather 'the suppressed'. This applied social justice as a broader, and therefore, more inclusive term.

It is important to notice that their justice-laden reconciliation is based on the eschatological understanding of the world, history, and human suffering as Park Chi-Yong presented. In fact, eschatological understanding of the world, history, and suffering is an interpretation of human emancipation suppressed by evil power. The emancipation is accomplished when God judges, and sets the victimized free from the power. In this line, victims conceived justice-driven reconciliation, hoping to emancipate themselves from suppression and pain in the present. However, previous literature has noticed that the religious sense of justice is sometimes used to justify and legitimize violence in the name of God's command.[584] However, victims who were Christian, when they associated it with reconciliation, used the religious meaning of justice as a form of emancipation, not retribution.

Forgiveness completes reconciliation

Another narrative meaning emerging from the five victims' autobiographical narratives in relation to reconciliation is forgiveness. Two participants, Kim Gye-Soon and Jung Chan-Ae expressed the need for forgiveness as a central element of a reconciled society. As an axiom of Christian teaching, both showed the sense of assimilating the obligation of forgiveness. From their narratives, forgiveness is not limited to interpersonal relationships. Instead, they addressed the historical and political wrongs and placed the meaning of forgiveness in a societal and historical dimensions. Kim Gye-Soon pursued a redemptive meaning to her life of suffering and defended forgiveness for the next generation and for a peaceful future. Her redemptive meaning is rooted in her Christian identity.

> Of course, the past event was horrible. It was such a tragedy. However, we ought not to preserve our anger and resentment towards our enemies permanently. We can't live with those emotions every day. We must redeem such feelings. We must forgive

[583] Barkan, 'Introduction: Historians and Historical Reconciliation'.
[584] For this aspect, see R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999); Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil: Five Warning Signs* (New York: HarperOne, 2008).

> them. We are able to forgive those who killed my family, my brothers and sisters, with God's guidance. We must follow his way. I mean, we have to make a state without wars and violence. We have to leave this country to the younger generations peacefully. The suffering must stop here. It's our business, not our descendants'. We must finish this suffering by forgiving our enemies.

When I asked for more detail, she elaborated:

> Well, you know, people in this world take revenge. They hold on to their antagonistic emotions against the offenders forever. But, if we believe and follow those words and stories in the Bible, we are able to stop the grudge and forgive the offenders. It is no use crying over spilt milk. My pain and our pain are in the past. We cannot do anything about that. We cannot change what happened. Yes, what happened is such a sad history, and every single victim is … [*pause*] Now, it's time to forgive the past… I think, almost every believer thinks this way. I don't mean that we should look back, but we also must look forward, and therefore, the next generations in the future can live in a peaceful society. Under His [*God's*] reign, we can be united. There will be no more war but only peace.

Jung Chang-Ae also expressed forgiveness. However, her account of forgiveness is somewhat ambiguous. She indicated that it is very hard for her to forgive the person who accused of her father, revealing retributive emotion while acknowledging the need for forgiveness from a broader perspective. Her personal emotion to the specific person is not resolved, but she thinks of forgiveness because it is a virtue of the kingdom of God.

> Honestly, I don't know if I can ever forgive the person who accused my father. But, I know, forgiveness is a critical value that um… calls for the Kingdom of God. I learn from the Bible study group. I have been thinking about it for a long time. [*sobbing*] But how can I forgive the bad bastard? God knows it. God will know my grudges and suffering and his wrongdoing. He will remember all. That's fine.
>
> …
>
> What is certain is that this country needs forgiveness. Our forgiveness. It's hard for us to forgive. But slowly, very slowly, it takes place. This country will achieve peace when

we forgive the country and offenders. This is how I have been thinking.

For religious individuals, forgiveness is rooted in their religious burden to complete the kingdom of God. Although Kim Gye-Soon and Jung Chan-Ae's reasoning for forgiveness is the same, their visions of forgiveness differ. While Kim positively accounted for the function of forgiveness, Jung still holds her resentment, waiting for God' judgement for herself and the offender. Despite the difference between the two participants, what is critical for this study is that, arising from their religious belief, forgiveness is envisioned, that is, expressed by religious motivations from their religious identity.

It seems that forgiveness is a religious requirement for those victims who are Christians. The perspective on forgiveness that they showed seemed that they followed the religious requirement, rather than voluntarily pursue it. Even though Kim Gye-Soon spoke of the importance of forgiveness, she like Jung Chan-Ae narrated it collectively not personally. This demonstrates that forgiveness as an individual agent is envisioned at the collective level, although victims are Christians. This proves that there is a minimal relation between forgiveness and religion.

Reconciliation as Deterrence

While justice and forgiveness consist of practices of reconciliation, the five victims also asserted that reconciliation need to guarantee that the same forms of violence will not occur in the future. If the root causes of violence are not clearly addressed, documented, and transformed, reconciliation is unlikely to take place. Thus, trust in or an assurance of a future without violence is also important for reconciliation in the eyes of victims; victims may participate in some educational activities to deter violence in the future by explicitly witnessing the victimization of violence.[585]

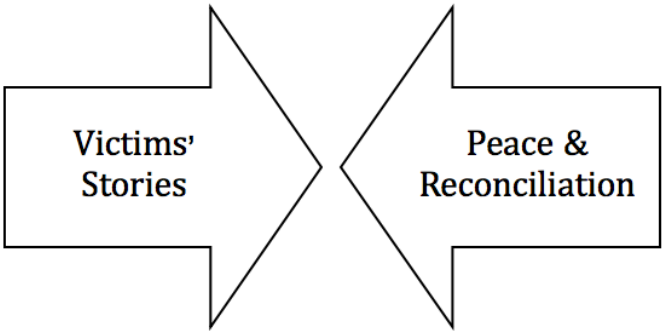
Jung Byung-Doo asserted that reconciliation starts from a trusted promise for a peaceful future and that subjects of violence guarantee no further violence, thereby producing no more victims like them. He firmly proclaimed that victims need a belief in the initiation of a peaceful future for reconciliation because they need to see that eradicating the same violence is an essential

[585] Irazuzta, Maeso, and Villalón, '"Victims as Educators": Sentimental Education in a Peace-Building Context'.

condition for reconciliation. Jung stated that:

> While participating in some activities, I say, what is the most critical task is to deter violence. I speak to students and the younger generation about this value. Think about it. If there was no war, would my father have been killed in such a way? I mean, at least not in this way! Wars allow violence to be performed by the evil power. No war is the answer to this country. This whole society must remember and recognize the perilous danger of wars and violence. Peace and war are two sides of the one coin. If society does not change, peace can't be guaranteed. Reconciliation is nothing without the promise of peace. Why would we victims even think of reconciling when the danger of violence is still there? Reconciling with whom?

In this sense, Jung Byung-Doo and Kim Gye-Soon asserted that their life stories can function as a driving force to deter violence. As their suffering came from the wrong deeds of the political power that performed unjust killings during the war, they think that stories of such violence and their lived experience may let the public know about the danger of war and violence.



> We take peace for granted too easily, not knowing what happened to civilians. So, I… say that notifying the society about my story and other victims' stories is very important for what we say, reconciliation. It can do something for it.
>
> (Jung Byung-Doo)

> Our stories are important. What is interesting today is that no one wanted to listen to these stories in the past. But the world has changed a lot, I reckon. People slowly understand why our life stories are precious for society. This is true. There are no

> such stories like mine. If this society wants genuine peace and genuine reconciliation, our stories must be heard more widely.
>
> (Kim Gye-Soon)

This aspect of reconciliation does not explain how religious identity-driven autobiographical narratives guide victims to generate meaning of reconciliation. Nonetheless, this aspect is critical to understand victim-centered reconciliation. When it comes to reconciliation, scholars have widely discussed it as relationship building between victims and offenders.[586] However, victims in this chapter offered a different meaning of reconciliation, which may be referred to as deterrence. As Sarkin and Daly noted, reconciliation can be deterrence of further violence,[587] and participants corresponded to this, stressing the guarantee of the peaceful future. In their account, reconciliation is not different from building peaceful society, so that victims do not need to worry about the repetition of the same violence. This may be viewed as a transformative perspective on reciliation, that guarantees not only religions building but also a secure provision of the society.[588]

Moreover, in pursing reconciliation as a peaceful society, victims recognize the importance of their voice as a source of peace. This recognition was shared with other victims. Victims related that their life stories are the only living witness that can awaken the oblivious society to the state violence. They commonly stated that their life story can play a subjective role in building a peaceful society by informing the public about the danger of war and violence.

Summary of the Analysis

The thematic analysis of this chapter has shown that victims' narratives are associated with an eschatological worldview, history, and human suffering, which become the basis of victims' self-recognition and meaning for reconciliation in their autobiographical stories. Narrative themes emerging from this analysis prove the strength of religious narratives for victims who had Christian identity when they intended to generate meaning for reconciliation. Although victims differed in their perspectives and in the emphasis they placed on reconciliation, they had an opportunity to create subjective meanings of what reconciliation can and ought to be in

[586] Lederach, *Building Peace*; De Gruchy, *Reconciliation*.
[587] Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.
[588] Lambourne, 'Transformative Justice, Reconciliation, and Peacebuilding'; Daly, 'Transformative Justice'.

accordance with their religious identity.

8.4 Synthesis and Reflection of the Findings

This chapter illustrated the narrative processing of victims who proclaimed Christian identity as the fundamental source for explaining who they are and how they have come to be in the middle of suffering and developing meaning for reconciliation. This chapter, as in the two previous chapters, reported five particular victims' narratives with structural and thematic technique of analysis. By reflecting on what has been addressed in this chapter, I will lead the discussions to a conclusion.

Religious narrative, as explained in Chapter 5, is an integral resource for religious individuals to constitute their religious identity. The linguistic aspect of religious identity shows that individuals adopt religious interpretations to make sense of life events by relying on religious language, story, and discourses.[589] Through the process of internalizing religious narratives in telling life stories and appraising meaning, individuals obtain subjective authorship in composing their life stories, reflect on and develop meanings for their lives.

Building on the theoretical framework, this chapter has illustrated that five victims who are Christian showed a strong reliance on religious narratives of eschatology. Victims' religious narratives on eschatology were rooted in their identity as Christians, which develops the selfhood with absolute trust in the omnipotent God.[590] In this study, victims enhance their sense of selfhood by abiding by the narratives of eschatology. These narratives emerged through understanding the world when victims described their suffering. With the reliance on these narratives, victims understood themselves and their life of suffering in order to make sense of their existential location between good and evil. Although the world and history have been under the evil power, they trust that God, the ultimate good, has chosen them, known their suffering, and planned their life course so as to complete God's righteousness in human history. This helped victims to endure emotional suffering and other life stressors arising from civilian massacres. However, this understanding not only culminates in appreciating their suffering, but produces an awareness of their social roles. Because the kingdom of God should be partly accomplished in this earthly life, victims recognize themselves as agents for the kingdom with their redemptive suffering. By the eschatological understanding, victims develop meaning for reconciliation through the perspective

[589] Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*.
[590] For more information about the notion of the Christian self, see James M. Houston and Jens Zimmermann, eds., *Sources of the Christian Self: A Cultural History of Christian Identity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2018).

of justice, forgiveness, and trust for a peaceful future.[591] What they envisage in this world by extracting redemptive and subjective meaning is closely related to their aspirations for the accomplishment of the kingdom of God, because there their suffering and pain will be used for good purposes and finally be redeemed at the end of historical time.

This eschatological narrative reasoning represents a high level of engagement with historical interpretation and meaning. Indeed, these five victims' historical aspirations, overlap, to some extent, with those victims who asserted their national identity which was addressed in Chapter Six. Of course, Christian victims as Koreans, are concerned with the historical wrongs and desire to correct them as the fundamental condition for peace and reconciliation. However, the internal reasoning in each victim group differed. Whereas victims with strong national identity aspire to the transformation of historical wrongs based on unresolved victimization and victimhood, those who were Christian hope for tentative justice, peace and reconciliation. That is to say, victims extract meaning for peace and reconciliation to the degree to which they await and meet the ultimate justice, peace, and reconciliation at the end of the human history. This is what Pannenberg notes: Christians see that the ultimate justice and truth can only be accomplished at the end of the day.[592] Human history must have a confluence with the history of God's redemption. For this to happen, religious individuals have to participate in God's economy of history, by giving a redemptive view to their suffering and the self, and perceiving social roles. Therefore, what people in this world ought to do is to act in their best interests, while awaiting the coming God. Five victims, to a greater or lesser extent, presented this approach in recounting their life stories. Although their meanings for peace and reconciliation are similar to those of other victims because it is an obligation in this worldly life, they place a layer on peace and reconciliation, which is not immediately apparent. Instead, they express what they truly want through a religious or spiritual mode of narrative. Thus, what is obvious to Christian victims is that they linger in the hope for the future through a present interpretation of past events. A religious understanding and an appropriate interpretation of peace and reconciliation is critical for those who have a religious identity.

Two implications can be thought for further studies regarding this chapters' findings. First, how conflicting interpretations affect religious victims in different ways in influencing their behaviors and developing meaning can be explored. This chapter has shown that a religious interpretation plays a critical role for Christian victims in their meaning-making. Through such an interpretation, they shared a common understanding of the world and self-recognition in the light of eschatology. Although victims may share common meanings, their various interpretations of eschatology may

[591] De Gruchy, *Reconciliation*.
[592] Pannenberg, 'The Task of Christian Eschatology'.

bring about different internal narrative processing, resulting in different social behaviors at a deeper level. Different interpretation may be due to teachings by different denominations and sects. For example, the participant Jung Chan-Ae showed a somewhat distinctive understanding compared to the others. As a member of the Jehovah's Witness church, her understanding of the world was rather radical and she held a strong retributive emotion towards her enemies, hoping for the divine judgement, whereas others who belonged to the Presbyterian church and the Holiness church exhibited more redemptive sentiments to their enemies and the state. These differences probably arise from a different interpretations of eschatology within these denominations. A more in-depth investigation of religious victims from different denominations is needed, using a comparative study.

Second, Christian identity can be compromised by some ideological positions, in particular, communism. Because Christianity adopts a negative perspective on communism and North Korea, Christian victims struggle to understand the death of the deceased in the war. In this study, Park Chi-Yong's narratives revealed ambiguity and confusion about this issue. His father, Park Shin-Deuk was killed in the name of the Bodo League massacres, which aimed to kill those who were influenced by communist ideology before the Korean War. However, Park Chi-Yong denied the fact of his father's involvement with communism, and became critical of communism. He understood that his father was innocent, and was not influenced by communism at all. He described his father's story as deriving from his present Christian identity, opposing communism, which denies religion and the existence of God. This identity tension appeared throughout Park Chi-Yong's narrative. Yet he does not concede the Christian position which is anti-communism, but rather illogically asserts the regime of God in Korea. This interpretation conflicts with those of other victims, who start from the position of accepting the fact that their parents were killed for their acceptance of communist ideology. Although their meanings for peace and reconciliation are redemptive based on their religious identity, the ultimate purposes and visions differ. A nuanced approach to Christian identity in its historical context is needed in further research.

8.5 Summary

This chapter has provided an in-depth analysis of five individual victims' autobiographical narratives, concentrating on how Christian identity influences victims' emplotment of life storylines, and encourages them to build subjective meanings for reconciliation. Throughout this chapter, I have presented the view that victims who are Christians adopt religious narratives that provide a religious interpretation of life, the self, and suffering. By interweaving personal

narratives with religious ones, they were able to create coherence, subjective meaning and integrative themes in their autobiography. To do so, they built personal stories as religious testimony. Different religious rhetoric were adopted in order to express their suffering religiously. These structure guided victims to develop a particular genre of autobiography. A core theme, eschatology, emerged from that kind of autobiography, which promoted victims to anchor religious understanding of life, suffering, and history. Relying on eschatological narratives, victims expressed who they are, how they came to be, and what they ought to do through the lens of an eschatological world understanding. By the process of narrative reasoning, victims disclosed meaning for healing the dark history, forgiveness, and a peaceful future without violence, all of which were regarded as the critical components of reconciliation.

In the next chapter, I will conclude this thesis by summarizing and evaluating the research findings, and recommending some research ideas for further research. I will also addresses some limitations of this study, so that further research can avoid the methodological and theoretical constraints of this research.

Conclusion

Chapter 9
Discussion and Conclusion

> Reconciliation is however wider than meeting the needs of victims, important as this is. It should involve the entire society. (…) Addressing the legacy of the conflict should not be confined to those who see themselves as having been primarily involved: politicians, victims and perpetrators. It is necessary to engage the entire society, particularly those who perceive themselves as 'uninvolved'. All institutions and governance structures have a stake in a reconciliation agenda.
>
> Hamber and Kelley, 2005[593]

This chapter provides concluding remarks on the research questions and findings that this study has presented thus far. This thesis was designed to investigate in-depth knowledge about how individual victims associate with a social value of reconciliation in the midst of understanding their life of suffering as a result of political violence. In the context of deeply divided societies, where ongoing social and political dispute impedes the task of dealing with the violent past, the majority of victims struggle with the absence of truth, justice, and reparation. They combat poverty, social stigma, and traumatic memories by themselves, living silently. In these unfavorable situations, victims do not just wait for governmental or institutional supports, but rely more on self-directed devices to maintain equilibrium from chronic anxiety and insecurity in everyday life. Victims seem to be resilient from their trauma through the process of internal processing, and eventually become participatory social actors, espousing reconciliation. Nonetheless, it is significantly unknown how they have come to be resilient and in what sense they endorse the social catchphrase, reconciliation, under the circumstances of ongoing victimization and discrimination. This study was one of the early attempts to delve into this social phenomenon of victim issues, which take place in numerous deeply divided societies, particularly in South Korea. It, therefore, asked one core question and three sub-questions. To reiterate them: 'How do victims of political violence develop subjective perspectives on reconciliation in the presence of suffering?' Three subsequent questions were elaborated: (1) How can victims make sense of their daily lives in the presence of continued victimization?; (2) What kind of self-images do victims recognize and develop as their own in the absence of social recognition of their suffering?; (3)

[593] Hamber and Kelly, 'A Place for Reconciliation? Conflict and Locality in Northern Ireland', 18.

What aspects and meanings of reconciliation do victims espouse, and how can they utilize their experience to build a reconciled society in the aftermath of political violence?

To evaluate the research findings and emphasize the strength of this study adequately, this chapter summarizes and reflects the key research findings, focusing on what they imply for reconciliation processes in the South Korean context. Section 9.1 encapsulates research question 1 and 2, both of which asked how victims approach their victimization and selfhood regarding the life of suffering. Then, section 9.2 evaluates the last research question: meanings of reconciliation. This section will be longer than section 9.1 because meanings of reconciliation have not substantially discussed in the previous three chapters. By synthesizing those meanings, it eventually offers a victim-centered reconciliation framework, which is a generalized form of reconciliation for other contexts. Moreover, section 9.3 provides further thoughts on reconciliation processes in Korea. Last but not least, both sections 9.4 and 9.5 suggests some implications further research regarding the outcome of the present study. After that, I, finally, conclude this thesis.

9.1 Victimizations and Self-Identity

This thesis asked and responded to victims' internal mechanism of developing subjective meaning of reconciliation in the aftermath of political violence. This research interest was investigated by looking at victims' autobiographical narratives and reasoning. Participants in this study showed that they relied on narrative processing, which is marked by identity-based autobiographical reasoning of making sense of their lives of suffering, developing selfhood, and elaborating meanings of reconciliation. During the process, victims look back and discover meanings for their present and future lives. As interpreters, victims express their thoughts and feelings in their personal stories. Interpretations ingrained in their personal narratives shed light on their ordinary reasoning, concerning values that they might have adopted in their lives. In composing personal narratives, they do not speak in a vacuum, but address what they have routinely been thinking. That is autobiographical reasoning, which allows victims to interpret the unjust violent events and unfavorable social environments in a way that gives meaning to their daily lives and suffering from harms imposed on them. This eventually guides them to create some sense of reconciliation and establish reasonable justifications for it. Subjective points of view are made and developed in such a way, governed by their dominant identities, which reinforce the narrative processing and meaning-making. In this light, personal narratives adequately illustrate the internal process of why and how victims come to arrive at their particular meanings subjectively.

Victims' autobiographical reasoning presented a thicker explanation of identity-focused narrative meaning. To reiterate each process, some victims focused heavily on their national identity and historical context in understanding the social world and suffering. Addressing national pride in the form of Korean nationalism and their victim status, these participants portrayed themselves as historical subjects and moral agents. Their narratives were an appeal for a transformation from partial memories and narratives that excluded their experience of national history to an inclusive memory. By adopting moral perspectives on human nature and wars, they addressed their moral and conscientious views on human beings in war, envisioning how society needs to go forward, rectifying the legacies of historical wrongs. Meanwhile, some victims elaborated on family-centered meaning-making. Because civilian massacres were an organized national project for the extermination of leftist families, they not only described their personal experiences but those of their family as a result of the violence. In doing so, those victims developed pride in their family, on the one hand, and addressed the collective suffering of their family on the other. Realizing their familial role, rules, and boundaries, they described themselves as the head of the family, protector, and messenger of the family values. By depicting these, they were greatly concerned about how to make their shattered families more resilient and restored following the traumatic events. Christian participants also presented intriguing perspectives on the research questions. Rooted in eschatological narratives, these victims provided an apocalyptic interpretation of history and human suffering. They tended to rely on religious worldviews, such as the distinction between good and evil, and divine providence which outlined their boundaries of interpretation. They also asserted who they are in the midst of traumatic memories religiously. Describing themselves as children of God and redemptive sufferers, they provided a redemptive vision of suffering. This internal processing, that outlines the view on the social and political world that suppresses them for a longer period time and portrays the self-images, assuredly guided participants to think of the value of reconciliation. Meanings raised from their narrative include no retribution, social justice, and historical correction, and forgiveness. Meanings of reconciliation will be further reflected in the next section. Table 9.1. summarizes the research findings.

	Structural Analysis		Thematic Analysis			
	Emplotment	Other Features	Root Theme	Mindset or Worldview	Self-Recognition	Meaning of Reconciliation
Participants with National Identity	Autobiography as historical witness	Official historical narratives vs. counternarratives	Expansion of historical memory	a. Aligning with Korean Nationalism b. Pride as Korean c. Victims as suppressed yet devoted citizens	a. Historical subject b. Moral agent	a. Victim-centred dealing with the past b. Shared memory and narratives c. The Cornerstone of peace for the Korean Peninsula
Participants with Family Identity	Autobiography as part of family story	a. Symbolic family events b. Family values as a behavioral principle	Resilient family restoration	a. Pride in the family b. Suffering of the family	a. The head of the family b. Protector c. Messenger of the family value	a. No revenge b. Social justice c. Restoring impaired reputation d. Historical rightness
Participants with Religious Identity	Autobiography as religious testimony	Religious rhetoric of suffering	Adoption of eschatology	a. The distinction between good and evil b. Trusting divine providence	a. Children of God b. Redemptive sufferer	a. Justice b. Forgiveness c. Deterrence

Before integrating and evaluating meanings of reconciliation, I would like to highlight two critical points regarding victims' autobiographical narratives and reasoning. First, victims' narrative processing is deeply influenced by cultural and collective voices in society. As noted in Chapter 5, personal narratives are an adoption of sociocultural factors.[594] This study proves that autobiographical narratives, when viewed through the tellers' identity, are an internalized reflection of cultural narratives. Personal narratives and meaning-making cannot be entirely personal, but instead are associated with external influences. While victims addressed their particular worldview or mindset, developed self-images, and provided meanings of reconciliation, they were deeply embedded in a sociocultural sense of meaning-making. Therefore, meanings of reconciliation were created through the identity-driven interpretation ingrained in Korean social culture to which they belong. It was expressed as collective identity voices in personal narratives. For instance, nationalist narratives, familial roles and values, and religious mindset encouraged victims to internalize such collective ideas and voices in themselves. By adopting such voices, they reaffirmed and reinforced their national, familial, and religious affiliation to which they belong. It underlines that the personal mechanism does not imply that they indulge in individualistic thinking, but instead, they do so vis-à-vis communities that they belong to, in understanding their suffering and giving meaning to their lives.

What then does it imply for the way that victims conceived the idea of reconciliation? It tells that victims in the Korean context endorsed reconciliation by interweaving their ideas with cultural voices arising from the national, familial, and religious identities. Their justification for aligning with nationalist narratives showed that victims perceive themselves as the historical self, who needs to reconcile with the partial and biased Korean history. Reconciliation, then, ought to respond to the historical requirement. Family is an elementary unit for the collective Korean society, letting individuals perceive themselves as the familial self. As the historical wrong destroyed families on a large scale, the familial self is at the forefront of rebuilding their family. Reconciliation has something to do with the familial reconstruction, and it is the right way to remedy Korean society. Religion, although it is often understood as an individual agent in western societies, provides collective affiliation with religious members in Korean society. Religious victims embrace religious values and narratives as their primary reference for understanding the world and the selfhood. It led victims to think of reconciliation religiously.

Another feature of victims' autobiographical narratives is that informants showed high standards of morality in interpreting the cause of violence, suffering and victimization. While

[594] Nelson, 'Narrative and Self, Myth and Memory; Phillip L. Hammack, 'Narrative and the Cultural Psychology of Identity', *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 12, no. 3 (2008): 222–47; Thorne, 'Putting the Person into Social Identity'; Singer, 'Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan.

autobiographical narratives were composed with their dominant identity delivering collective voices, participants' morality played a part in the narrative processing. Participants' narratives were ingrained in conscientious perspectives on humanity, supporting their interpretation of how they feel they should act in their suffering. These perspectives developed their altruistic attitudes towards other victims and society. When they were concerned about themselves and their families, they felt similarly towards other victims who had not found the truth and were suffering from psychological instability.

These moral lines affected victims' descriptions both of how they have lived and how they ought to act in society, corresponding to what previous scholars have noted: that is, victims' positive or inclusive attitudes based on their moral thinking have a critical role in promoting reconciliation in deeply divided societies.[595] For example, those victims who were embedded in national identity realized that they were or saw themselves as moral agents in national history. Interpreting historical events and society humanely, they shunned demonizing the perpetrators of violence, and instead viewed them as victims of dark history. This understanding expands the need for reconciliation, to form a mature society whose members are commonly aware of historical errors and the need to correct them. For those victims who had strong familial mindsets, morality is a device for differentiating their family from those of the offenders. Addressing their great pride in the broader family clan as well as their direct ancestors and the deceased, participants conveyed that their present actions are motivated by their moral learning, which is a verbal tradition of the family. These victims avoid violent responses or revengeful acts towards their enemies, following their ancestors' words on the one hand, and being concerned for their descendants' security and well-being on the other. By displaying moral behaviors, they preserve the image of a moral family, which is related to family resilience. However, morality for Christian participants was not as strong as for others. Instead, Christian identity motivated participants to adopt a religious sense of morality. These informants were more embedded in a religious, rather than a moral interpretation. Religious interpretation directly affected their understanding of reconciliation.

9.2 Assessment of Meaning of Reconciliation

While this study was focused primarily on victims' internal processing, participants provided diverse meanings of reconciliation. Here, I want to review those meanings. Above all, participants of this study tended to perceive reconciliation as a social apparatus transforming unjust social structures which systematically discriminate against stigmatized victims of violent events. This

[595] For this, see Chapter 3.3.

requires a historical amendment to redress past errors, broadening the social and economic dimensions of justice to include victims as ordinary members of society. From this point of view, the present study has seen that remembering victimization and the suffering of innocent victims and restoring victims' impaired reputations are critical for reconciliation, and may prevent society from the repetition of similar violence in the future. Reconciliation processes, to be sustainable and inclusive, should acknowledge victims as subjective witnesses of history with agentic roles. Performing reconciliation in this way may promote social integration and structural transformation and broaden the scope of peace in the Korean peninsula.

Multi-layered Reconciliation

The reconciliation that this study has found is a multi-layered social practice. As noted in Chapter 3, scholars argue that reconciliation is a societal goal and process, aiming at varying degrees of restoration between individuals, social and political groups.[596] It may refer to a holistic approach to reconciliation as part of post-conflict reconstruction.[597] Surprisingly, previous studies on reconciliation have only noted this partially. That is, scholars tend to segregate diverse aspects of reconciliation rather than to theorize them as an integrated set. By contrast, participants of this study understood reconciliation as an overarching social instrument that includes interpersonal, psychosocial, political, and historical aspects.

First, participants argued that reconciling the hostile relationship between victims and offenders is essential in the context of state-led political violence. In their eyes, mass killings were not only conducted by the state authority, but also by some identifiable individuals with state authority. Perpetrators continued to suppress the surviving family members even after the violence. Victims had to live side by side silently with perpetrators in the same villages. Despite continued suppression in their daily lives, some participants stressed that the restoration of a relationship with their enemies and forgiveness are critical values in society. Yet, since most offenders were already dead, victims attempted to reconcile with the offenders' children and their family members. They thought that building new relationships with offenders' descendent is a sign of reconciliation between victims and perpetrators. However, interpersonal reconciliation is often overlooked as part of post-conflict reconstruction. Most scholars understand, reconciliation is a societal mechanism that builds a political or legal architecture. It has little to do with

[596] Lederach, *Building Peace*; Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*; Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*; Kevin Clements and SungYong Lee, 'Introduction' in *Multi-level Reconciliation and Peacebuilding: Stakeholder Perspectives*, eds. Kevin Clements and SungYong Lee (New York: Routledge, 2021), 1-14.
[597] Maddison, *Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation*.

interpersonal relations, dealing with a psychological or spiritual affair.[598] Yet some participants in this study provide evidence that their relationship with offenders and their descendants may promote or complete reconciliation in society. They underpin an argument that micro-reconciliation is indispensable for macro-reconciliation.[599]

Second, psychosocial reconciliation was defended in the sense that people need to overcome their prejudice and social bias towards victims. Because people's negative perception of them stigmatizes them throughout different generations, their trauma continues and daily lives are threatened. Participants argue that reconciliation is a social activity to recognize them as innocent victims of political violence, not communists. They went on to say that reconciliation ought to be practiced in a way to reduce social bias towards them and to recognize their suffering. Their views on reconciliation associate with collective social learning that aims at mutual understanding of violent events between groups in conflict so as to remedy dishonor and stigma on victims.[600] Through that learning, social members can raise their awareness to trust and respect those who are victimized and *vice versa*.[601] Participants emphasized that the social aspect of reconciliation in that way builds a curative social mechanism and meets their emotional needs.[602]

Third, participants also advocated the political level of reconciliation in demanding equal civic status. [603] In the South Korean context, public discrimination was customary, excluding stigmatized victims as second-class citizens. Their experience in the public arena aggravated their trauma, as they were not recognized as equal citizens with civil rights. For victims, their political rights must be restored, and this transforms the social structure of discrimination and exclusion. Some political reconciliation theorists argue that amending the legal framework and restoring the rule of law prepares the reconciliatory agenda to include political trust and respect. [604] Respondents in this study were not concerned with such a legal framework, but with their civic and political rights, which were not given to them due to stigmatization. Thus, acknowledging victims as equal citizens is the key practice of reconciliation as a political agenda.

Last, most participants advocated historical reconciliation. This sense of reconciliation refers to

[598] Murphy, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation*.
[599] Pratto and Glasford, 'How Needs Can Motivate Intergroup Reconciliation in the Face of Intergroup Conflict'; Čehajić-Clancy et al., 'Social-Psychological Interventions for Intergroup Reconciliation'.
[600] Aiken, *Identity, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice*.
[601] For this aspect, see chapters in Arie Nadler, Thomas E. Malloy, and Jeffery D. Fisher, eds., *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[602] Nadler and Schnabel, 'Instrumental and Socioemotional Paths to Intergroup Reconciliation and the Needs-Based Model of Socioemotional Reconciliation'; Shnabel et al., 'Promoting Reconciliation Through the Satisfaction of the Emotional Needs of Victimized and Perpetrating Group Members; Shnabel and Nadler, 'A Need-Based Model of Reconciliation.
[603] Verdeja, *Unchopping a Tree*; Moellendorf, 'Reconciliation as a Political Value'.
[604] Verdeja; Murphy, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation*.

historical correction and remembrance of their victimization. Although their life experience is a historical fact, they are being forgotten and excluded from the official historical memory and narratives. Victims strongly argued that reconciliation needs to be practiced so as to expand the partial historical memory and narratives so that a balanced national history can be written. The historical level of reconciliation sheds light on the task of liquidation of the past, which redresses historical wrongs in the distanced past.

Victims as Minimalists and Maximalists

While participants in this study commonly endorsed reconciliation, their emphasis varied. Although the eighteen participants shared some aspects of reconciliation, there were still some differences in meaning, concerning whether reconciliation is conceived either in a redemptive or a practical sense. Participants made both redemptive and practical meanings of reconciliation, or they were alternatively differentiated or nested.

Some informants positively defended the value of reconciliation, while others were reluctant to agree with the restorative sense of reconciliation. The varying voices on reconciliation can be explained by what scholars theorize as minimalism or maximalism, as noted in Chapter 3. That is, the minimalist account of reconciliation refers to the pursuit of a simple coexistence with former enemies, whereas that of maximalists specifies deeper relationship-building through a process of forgiveness. This study found out that although victims accept reconciliation to the degree to which it ought to transform the social structure, the strength of their commitment varied. For example, a few participants expressed a passive view of reconciliation: they were reluctant to appeal to reconciliation. For them, reconciliation is an uncomfortable notion when there is no attempt to reconcile. Also, they were disappointed by the government's responses to the issues of dealing with them and the past. Although most participants tried to defend reconciliation with different emphases such as peace, deterrence, and historical justice, they showed a sensitive reaction to the notion of reconciliation. Their reluctance is an objection to the deeper levels of reconciliation, which requires them to forgive perpetrators and ask for compensation. Because they felt burdened and in a state of moral imbalance between victims and offenders, they expressed sentiments of minimal reconciliation.

In contrast, others defended the deeper level of reconciliation. Their sentiments include reconciliation as relationship-building, forgiveness, and social transformation. The redemptive sense of reconciliation was expressed with the ethic of forgiveness, respect for all living beings, apology, truth, and justice. Participants envisioned reconciliation in association with these ethics.

When the informants expressed reconciliation founded on these ethics, they were prone to a principled meaning of reconciliation. As the reconciliatory work appeals to authentic relationship building with their enemies, they believed that truth, apology, justice and forgiveness may lead to relational reconstruction. Interestingly, victims with a religious identity tended to view reconciliation as a divine work of redemption, whereas others demonstrated moral awareness.

Framing Victim-centered Reconciliation

Acknowledging different points of view on reconciliation between participants, this study finally can offer a frame of victim-centered reconciliation. It is an integrative set, combining diverse meanings and dimensions endorsed by eighteen participants. As Figure 9.1 shows, it consists of social transformation, reparatory justice, historical correction, and deterrence. Eighteen respondents, by and large, supported all four meanings, while some emphasized one or another. Reconciliation in victims' eyes aims at social transformation as an ultimate goal. Transforming social structure requires reparatory justice and historical correction, both of which entail promotive, preventive, and curative policies by looking forwards and backwards. Reconciliation so pursued is an instinctive response to the long-standing experience of victimization, hoping to build a peaceful society without war and violence for the security of themselves and coming generations. Detailed descriptions of each aspect are shown below.

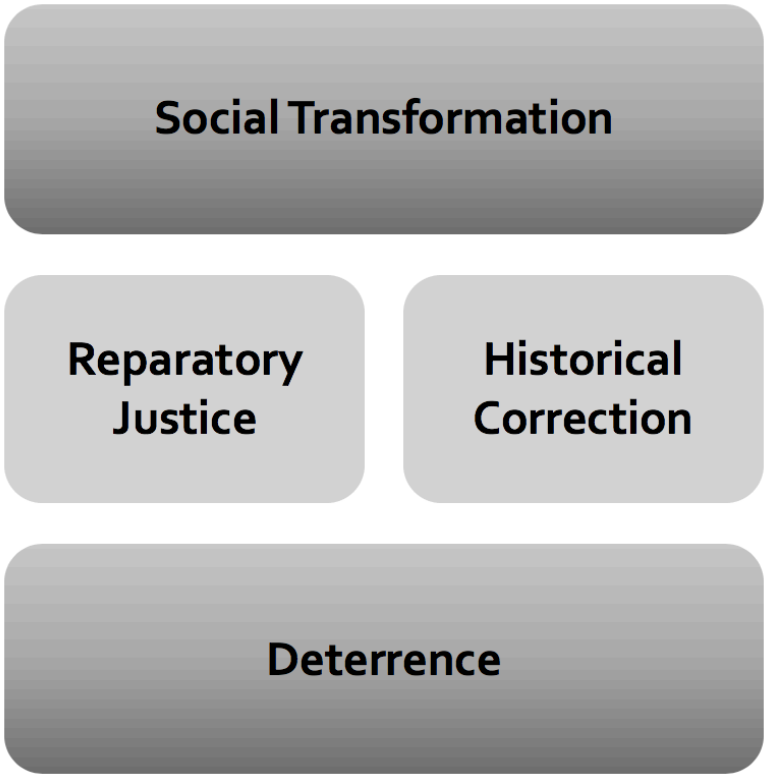


Figure 9.1. Victim-centered Reconciliation in South Korea

Reconciliation as Social Transformation

Victims of political violence apprehend reconciliation as a practical and material apparatus for social transformation. According to participants, civilian massacres in South Korea created a culture of violence that supports a social structure which reproduces unequal human rights, poverty, and stigma. They asserted that unjust social structure is still present, making them feel embittered and blocking the possibility of reconciliation. In this regard, they elaborated reconciliation as a social device for transforming the structure that continues to rule them out of society. At first glance, victims desire society to be more responsive to their harms and violated rights. Ultimately, they are concerned with social well-being, which allows every social member to enjoy a social life without inequality or suppression. It refers to the transformed society after violent conflict.

Scholars have theorized reconciliation as social transformation in the practices of transitional justice, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation.[605] They argue that genuine reconciliation is a

[605] See, for example, Maddison, *Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation;* Daly, 'Transformative Justice'; Lambourne, 'Transformative Justice, Reconciliation, and Peacebuilding'.

process of rectifying the wrongful past and reconstructs the shattered society so as to alter the socio-political structure that sustains injustice for victims. This includes legal and institutional changes that restore the rule of law and relational changes between citizens and between citizens and officials.[606] Reconciliation in this light is devoted to transforming ongoing conflict in societies, resolving sectarian forms of living, sustained hatred and demonization, false bias and prejudice, all of which present existential threats to victims' lives.

When participants underlined reconciliation as social transformation, they associated it with positive peace. Peace in a positive sense indicates the transformative conversion of society from war to peace, envisioning a preventive shift from violent social environments to mutual coexistence at different levels of society.[607] Reconciliation accords with this aspect of peace. Some participants enunciated the purpose of reconciliation as going beyond the absence of violence and war, and aiming to achieve a mutual coexistence between troubled individuals and groups through the process of dealing with the past. Participants used both terms interchangeably in order to indicate social transformation. Some participants used the term reconciliation as if it is a synonym of peace, while others argued the interconnectedness. On this point, respondents realized that they were subjects of peace, who can devote themselves to social well-being. They thought they could give a critical impetus to society, moving towards transformation, by witnessing their experience of violence and exhibiting moral behaviors like no revenge and forgiveness. This supports an argument that victims' inclusive beliefs and altruistic attitudes to perpetrators have a degree of potential for peace in deeply divided societies.[608] Participants in this study corresponded to this perspective, understanding themselves as agents for peace, seeking transformative conditions of society in a positive manner. In this way, victim-centered reconciliation is marked by a vision of social transformation.

Reconciliation as Reparatory Justice

The victim-centered goal of reconciliation involves two distinctive aspects: reparatory justice and historical correction. Justice is one of the critical components of reconciliation. However, the form of justice that promotes reconciliation is debatable. Scholars have generally discussed three

[606] Colleen Murphy, *The Conceptual Foundations of Transitional Justice*, Reprint edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
[607] Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, and Development and Civilization*; Johan Galtung, 'Violence, Peace, and Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91.
[608] Shnabel, Belhassen, and Mor, 'From Victimhood to Peace Activism'; Vollhardt, 'The Role of Victim Beliefs in the Israel-Palestine Conflict; Vollhardt and Bilali, 'The Role of Inclusive and Exclusive Victim Consciousness in Predicting Intergroup Attitudes.

different modes of victim-centered justice: punitive, restorative, and distributive justice.[609] Interestingly, participants in this study hardly identified retributive and restorative justice, but instead the reparatory form of justice, which advocates social needs for rectification of the past and redistribution to victims. According to Teitel, reparatory justice is referred to as a corrective type of justice which amends the ramifications of past wrongs by looking both forwards and backwards.[610] It is argued that it avoids binary lines of justice (e.g. retribution or restoration) and pursues settlement of past wrongs. It seeks redistributive policies, aiming to repair victims and affected communities as a result of violence.[611] Teitel further states that reparatory justice illustrates a holistic set of practices, including "reparations, damages, remedies, redress, restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, tribute."[612] In this understanding, reparatory justice does not exclude victims in the process of reconstruction of society but instead reintegrate both victims and perpetrators into society, empowering victims and their agentic roles to bridge their past suffering to their future.[613]

Reparatory justice was broadly sought by all of the eighteen participants, in the sense that reconciliation has to meet the long-term practices of reparation and rehabilitation, and to establish social conditions for inclusion of victims. They argued that to be reconciliatory, society needs to acknowledge their harms and suffering and to redistribute social goods by paying compensation. They contended that redistribution is the fundamental condition for their restoration, and that it develops socioeconomic justice so that other suppressed people can be rewarded in the future. Participants were not concerned with only their economic needs but also showed an interest in the amelioration of social justice.

The emphasis on reparatory justice derives from a different interpretation of justice. For example, some participants referred to justice in line with historical amendment. For them, justice redresses historical wrongs. It requires retrospective practices to legitimately place perpetrators and victims. Others understood justice as a familial concern, to pay back their family experience of bereavement, poverty, and stigmatization. They argued that justice is a device for socioeconomic support, so that the shattered family can be reconstructed. For others, justice mirrors a divine righteousness. Understanding their suffering in an apocalyptic way and themselves as redemptive sufferers, they thought that justice completes God's kingdom at the end of human history, which is the ultimate goal for the world in darkness. To do so, justice needs to

[609] Mani, 'Integral Justice for Victims'; Mani, *Beyond Retribution*. For more discussion on victim-centred justice, see Chapter 3.2.
[610] Teitel, *Transitional Justice*.
[611] Ibid, 119-20.
[612] Ibid, 119
[613] Mani, 'Rebuilding an Inclusive Political Community After War'.

decrease the prevalence of evil power in society and to increase social good. Despite these different understandings, participants converged to underscore the reparatory view of justice.

While this study's respondents endorsed reparatory justice in unison, it remains unclear how reparatory justice stimulates reconciliation in practice. There are some theoretical approaches examining the use of reparatory justice and reconciliation in victims' eyes after mass violence.[614] Nevertheless, more empirical studies are needed. This study is one of the first studies on this perspective.

Reconciliation as Historical Correction

Historical correction is another pillar of victim-centered reconciliation. Reconciliation is incomplete only with justice, and it needs to revise historical memories and narratives. Reconciliation as historical correction is instrumental in dealing with a distanced past. Because victims of past violence are stigmatized and forgotten in the presence of historical wrongs, whereas perpetrators are remembered and regarded as heroes, it ought to find historical truth. According to victims, irreconcilability originates from partial historical memories and narratives that do not properly acknowledge and remember historical wrongs, and their victimization. Participants upheld the notion that historical correction is the work of meeting historical justice, which finds out historical truth, acknowledges wrongdoers and victims, and rewrites official records. It changes the social memory and narratives that produce hostile prejudice and bias towards victims stigmatized as communists in Korean society. Reconciliation as historical correction, in this sense, is closely linked with the restoration of their impaired reputation. Crucially, this aspect promotes social acknowledgment of victims. Because victims are not recognized without the revision of national history and remembrance, they appealed to the fact that they are historical subjects that expand the limited historical memory and narratives, and aspire to a shared memory.

Realizing reconciliation as historical correction, victims argued that their stories are the witnesses of victimization and can awaken ordinary citizens' ignorance and complacency towards historical barbarity. They believe that their voices can raise the level of reconciliation by providing moral sentiments such as humanity, no revenge, and forgiveness. Society shall be transformed in this way as victims' stories and voices are widely heard.

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[614] See Lapante, 'The Plural Justice Aims of Reparations'; Lambourne, 'Transformative Justice, Reconciliation, and Peacebuilding'.

Reconciliation as Deterrence

Reconciliation is argued to prevent the occurrence of violence. The reparatory and historical approaches to reconciliation which target social transformation are deeply rooted in victims' desire for assuring a peaceful society, guaranteeing a secure social life. Victims' experiences of civilian massacres and continued victimization developed their conscientious understanding of war, violence, and human nature in the face of evil power and awareness of the need for fundamental prevention of further violence. Participants showed their deeper awareness that violence begets violence and hatred begets hatred. In realizing the cycle of violence and hatred and the need for security, participants asserted the role of reconciliation as deterrence, which means prevention of similar violence in the future.[615] In conventional studies, some scholars approach deterrence through building fair institutions and correcting criminal justice systems for the restoration of the rule of law.[616] In contrast, others argue that such approaches are unlikely to achieve deterrence, but relational change.[617] They contend that reconciliation as deterrence remedies antagonistic relationships between individuals and groups, and the reconciled relationship minimizes the possibility of further violence.[618] The restoration of hostile relationships prevents further human right violations and mass atrocities.

Reflecting on the debate over deterrence, participants in this study, when they expressed the needs for reconciliation, emphasized public awareness of the banality of political violence, even in democratic states. The political violence they experienced prevails and is repeated over time, and continues to segregate people unless they stay alert. Participants thus paid attention to the role of historical and peace education in promoting reconciliation as deterrence, and considered themselves as historical subjects to witness and educate people, especially younger generations, so as not to have to experience the same violence as they did in the future. This mirrors victims' social and historical concern to build a transformed society, which they think is the fundamental aim of reconciliation.

[615] Daly, 'Transformative Justice'; Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*; Bloomfield et al., *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*.
[616] David Mendeloff, 'Truth-Seeking, Truth-Telling, and Postconflict Peacebuilding: Curb the Enthusiasm?', *International Studies Review* 6, no. 3 (2004): 355–80; David A. Crocker, 'Punishment, Reconciliation, and Democratic Deliberation', *Buffalo Criminal Law Review* 5, no. 2 (2002): 509–49.
[617] Daly, 'Transformative Justice'.
[618] Ibid.; Daly and Sarkin, *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*.

9.3 Rethinking Reconciliation in Korea

This study set out to investigate the issue of reconciliation from victims' perspectives in the Korean context. The historical event of civilian massacres in the Korean War and unresolved victim issues reflect the prolongation of an ideological conflict between political groups and citizens in the country. As a result of the long-standing conflict between the left and the right, which intensified during the transitional era of democratic state-building after independence and has been protracted ever since, the society is divided into groups, along the conflictual lines of historical memories. Dominant public narratives marginalize victims of violence, and discrimination has become a social mechanism, imposing continuous suffering on victims.[619] The ideological conflict within South Korea maintains and reproduces cultural, structural, and symbolic violence, in which victims have to keep silent on the truth and cope with traumatic memories of the past events on their own.[620] In this social environment, the idea of reconciliation has appeared with the concern for the historical truth and justice. The attention to reconciliation, however, has been largely ignored, being regarded as a trouble maker that recalls an unwelcome past. Thus, social habitus and attempts at achieving reconciliation are significantly constrained by political dispute over the troubled past and dominant narratives of forgetting. Yet, this study, based on victims' autobiographical narratives of suffering, encourages the rethinking of the purpose and utility of reconciliation in Korea.

First, this study underlines that reconciliation needs to associate with conflict transformation. Reconciliation conceived as national and social integration is an ultimate goal of clearing up the past wrongdoings in the TRCK formation as the Framework Act links reconciliation with truth and justice. Many scholars, however, have argued that reconciliation in that sense has brought about a political backlash from the conservatives rather than integrating social division.[621] In particular, in the absence of the agreement of the 'truth', the TRCK activities nominally pursue social integration and reconciliation, but aim to rebuild historical memories and narratives, that deny those of the conservatives. Reconciliation in the TRCK is viewed as a power shift from the conservatives to the progressives in the name of historical justice. In this situation, reconciliation became trapped in the logic of 'the left versus the right', rooted in conflictual historical and social identity in South Korea, which blocks steps towards reconciliation.

[619] Jung-Gie Choi, 'The Civilians' Suffering in the Period of Korean War and the Demarcation between Citizen and Non-Citizen', *Journal of Modern Social Science* 14 (2010): 81–101; Kim and Kim, 'A Case Study on the Victims under State Implication System - Surviving as Eternal Fugitives'.
[620] Kim, *Politics of War*; Kim, *War and Society*.
[621] Kim, 'The Long Road towards Truth and Reconciliation'; Suh, 'Truth and Reconciliation in South Korea'.

Second, realizing the TRCK's built-in limitation to achieve reconciliation, the current study proposes that reconciliation needs a deeper consideration of transforming intractable conflict in South Korea. While espousing reconciliation through the lens of liquidation of the past, victims in this study tended to argue that reconciliation ought to serve for transforming the deeply rooted conflict arising from the War and violence. Although they stressed their needs and aspiration as the fundamental condition of reconciliation such as acknowledgement and restoring the reputation on the surface, they were at the same time deeply concerned with building a peaceful society together with descendants of perpetrators and ordinary citizens who did not know what had happened in the past. According to their words, South Korea is a thoroughly intractable society, and it needs to focus on healing and emancipation from wounds of the past wrongdoings in a way that addresses and corrects root causes of conflict. Interestingly, such tasks should not exclude any groups of citizens, whether they are victims or preparators, but commemorate the past wrongdoings all together. Indeed, victims rarely showed their antagonistic or retributive mind and emotion towards their previous enemies but a genuine consideration to the historical circumstances that put Korean people into a radical conflict, in which one kills another. To overcome the deeply rooted conflict, they asserted that their deceased family members and their suffering ought to be remembered just as those of perpetrators. If so, both victims and perpetrators can be rehumanized, and political and social bias on victims can be eventually reduced. Reconciliation then can be built in an agonistic manner in remembering and forming narratives,[622] which may lead to a peaceful and just society. Thus, reconciliation from victims' point of view specifies a process of healing both victims and perpetrators from the cycle of hatred and of transforming social conflict.

Furthermore, this study can support a point of view, claiming reconciliation as an essential component of building peace in the Korean Peninsula. It denotes that reconciliation and its process practiced through liquidation of the violent past can be a critical arena of the peace process in Korea, providing a new prospect for sustainable peace. Since the Cold War, peace in the Korean context has been widely understood as a synonym for the peace process between North and South Korea.[623] The Korean peace process aims to resolve the long-standing conflict between the two states and among extended allies, focusing on the ways to prevent military collisions and demilitarize armed forces. In this term, peace is often the ultimate goal of reunification. While this approach to peace in Korea has received significant global attention and been endorsed by military experts and diplomats, it unfortunately fails to recognize the importance of reconciliation and deliberately sets aside the task in South Korea regarding cases of political violence during and

[622] Maddison, *Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation*.
[623] For peacebuilding and peace process in Korea, see Kim, *The Korean Peace Process and Civil Society*.

after the Korean War. Thus, peace and reconciliation seem to target two different things in Korea: the former aims at reunification and the latter at historical justice. This conventional approach to peace and the peace process in Korea started to be questioned. Instead, a growing number of scholars recognize that attempts to build peace between North and South Korea are volatile without reconciliation in South Korea and need to collaborate with the process of dealing with the past.[624]

The research findings of this study underpin the perspective that peace in the Korean Peninsula is unlikely unless the ever-present issues of victims and the legacies of political violence are properly addressed and resolved. The political motivations of state-sponsored wrongdoings towards those who were regarded as leftists and sympathizers in the Korean War shows the acute confrontation between North and South Korea. It is exemplified in South Korean social division that repeats the ideological conflict, excluding some groups of people. That is to say, the continuation of anti-communist policy that has been central to the national policy of South Korea for the last several decades continued and fostered a frozen bias and prejudice towards the so-called leftists citizens as well as North Korea. The political narratives and mechanism have developed in a way to exclude those citizens in South Korea and crystalize the negative perception towards North Korea. Therefore, overcoming such social conflict through reconciliation may create possibilities to resolve the broader conflict between North and South. In other words, liquidation of the past in South Korean society that redresses what has gone wrong and how its citizens have been dealt with under the political mechanism may transform the long-standing bias and prejudice towards North Korea and the stigmatized victims, and it encourages South Korean society to take a different turn to making peace with North Korea. It is an integrative approach, aiming at retrospective attitudes to the past and present, not only to build a just society but also to coexist with the consanguineous other, North Korea. In short, reconciliation in South Korea can promote peace in the Korean Peninsula.

9.4 Implications for Future Research

Building upon the research findings and theoretical implications, this study can make some recommendations for further research. This includes suggestions for theoretical implications and victim-centeredness in peace and conflict studies. Overall, these proposals encourage close

[624] Ji-Eun Kim, 'Korea Unification as Healing and Reconciliation from Division Trauma and Collaborative Future: Implications from the cases of Germany and South Africa's Liquidation of the Past', *Unification and Peace*, 11, no. 1 (2019): 305-348.

attention to victims' voices and their capability as subjects of peace.

Theoretical Contributions

This study started the analysis with an integrative set of theories. The theoretical framework can contribute to theories about victim-focused practices in PACS. First, understanding victims' internal processing to reconciliation through the lens of national identity suggests a particular approach to the complex issue of nationalism and victims. National identity is often conceived as a source of conflict as it is prone to support an ideology of nationalism. Coupled with patriotic sentiments, it brings about a clash between different ethnonational identities in multiethnic societies such as Bosnia, Nigeria, and South Africa.[625] Nationalism is viewed as a negative force for peacebuilding practice.[626] However, it is only recently that scholars have offered a new research agenda linking peacebuilding and national identity. They focus on how national identity and nationalism form and reinforce everyday peacebuilding practices including reconciliation.[627] These scholars elucidated that the exclusion of national identity and nationalism is the result of the liberal approach to peacebuilding, and it blinds the everyday dynamic of peacebuilding from below in relation to actors' national identity embedded in their historical perspective. However, since national identity and nationalism form and affects people's everyday practices, supporting their mundane reasoning,[628] recent peacebuilding discourse has started to acknowledge and incorporate these aspects of national identity and nationalism. Victims' national identity and historical understanding in this study's framework can contribute to the early attempt to intersect everyday peacebuilding and nationalism. As mundane reasoning, national identity as Koreans motivated victims to become historical subjects, who associate their suffering and meaning of reconciliation with the historical understanding of war and a vision of a society, which makes them feel part of the nation. At the same time, they refused to acknowledge the dominant

[625] There is a significant quantity of literature on this aspect. See, for example, Nailah Ayub and Karen A. Jehn, 'The Moderating Influence of Nationalism on the Relationship Between National Diversity and Conflict', *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research* 3, no. 3 (2010): 249–75; K. M. de Silva, 'Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in South Asia', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 19, no. 2 (1996): 133–48; Karyna Korostelina, 'Concepts of National Identity and the Readiness for Conflict Behaviour', *National Identities* 10, no. 2 (2008): 207–23.

[626] Gëzim Visoka, 'Everyday Peace Capture: Nationalism and the Dynamics of Peace after Violent Conflict', *Nations and Nationalism* 26, no. 2 (2020): 431–46.

[627] Vjollca Krasniqi, Ivor Sokolić, and Denisa Kostovicova, 'Skirts as Flags: Transitional Justice, Gender and Everyday Nationalism in Kosovo', *Nations and Nationalism* 26, no. 2 (2020): 461–76; Orli Fridman, 'Peace Formation from below: The "Mirëdita, Dobar Dan!" Festival as an Alternative to Everyday Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism* 26, no. 2 (2020): 447–60; Denisa Kostovicova, Ivor Sokolić, and Orli Fridman, 'Introduction: Below Peace Agreements: Everyday Nationalism or Everyday Peace?', *Nations and Nationalism* 26, no. 2 (2020): 424–30; Nita Luci and Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers, 'Epistemic Justice and Everyday Nationalism: An Auto-Ethnography of Transnational Student Encounters in a Post-War Memory and Reconciliation Project in Kosovo', *Nations and Nationalism* 26, no. 2 (2020): 477–93.

[628] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1995).

historical narratives which supported nation-building processes. That way, their national identity and historical interpretation explain their complex and somewhat ironic responses to reconciliation. Of course, South Korean victims' nationalism narratives and patriotic minds need to be understood in the historical context, which is unique compared that of other countries. Despite that, the framework itself adds to the 'from below' framework of everyday peacebuilding, in particular, in the eyes of national identity and nationalism.

Second, family identity and reconstruction implies a familial approach to peacebuilding, reconciliation, and conflict resolution. The framework explains why and how individual victims overcome grief and sorrow and pursue some level of resiliency after a family loss.[629] As a source of identity and meaning, family and its concerns explain human behaviors, and it can give particular perspectives on peacebuilding strategies. However, whereas a vast quantity of peacebuilding literature mainly devotes its attention to organizational and systematic aspects, little research examines the familial influence on such practices. Only some literature acknowledges the importance of the roles of family identity, values, and parental support as a motivation for individual peace activism,[630] and no research has given full attention to this factor. What these works imply is that family, an elementary unit of local life, is an influential variable in peacebuilding, mainly in non-liberal states, where there is no clear boundary between familial and public lives. Indeed, this study noted that participants' pride in family and desire for family resiliency were the direct motivations for victims' behaviors and meaning-making in relation to reconciliation, and it infers their embeddedness in familial identity and lives. Moreover, this study also shows that personal trauma is essentially related to family suffering. As victims' feelings of bitterness come from the family experience of violence and the stigmatized status, victims' healing and resilient processes are closely associated with the restoration of the family. This gives a unique analytical framework to conventional peace studies, implying the familial dimension of healing, resilience, and reconciliation, perhaps in many non-liberal post-conflict societies.

Third, while national and family identities have received little attention, religion has been widely discussed as a determining factor in peacebuilding practices. Realizing the resurgence of religion in the politics of post-secular societies,[631] scholars in PACS have devoted their attention to understanding the roles of religion in conflicted societies. They broadly examine whether

[629] Walsh, 'Family Resilience'; Nadeau, 'Family Construction of Meaning'; Nadeau, 'Meaning Making in Family Bereavement'.
[630] Philippa Williams, *Everyday Peace? Politics, Citizenship and Muslim Lives in India* (Chichester; Malden: John Wiley and Sons, 2015); Helen Berents, 'An Embodied Everyday Peace in the Midst of Violence', *Peacebuilding* 3, no. 2 (2015): 1–14.
[631] Jürgen Habermas, 'Religion in the Public Sphere', *European Journal of Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2006): 1–25; Scott Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 1st ed., Culture and Religion in International Relations (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

religious narratives, symbols, institutions, leaders, and faith-based activism contribute to peace or conflict.[632] These works of literature include the roles of religion in local peacebuilding,[633] transitional justice,[634] and reconciliation.[635] Having noticed the diverse focus on religion in the trajectory of peace studies, there is a lack of systematic investigation of the relationship between religious identity and personal motivation in building peace. Some researchers in the study of lived religion try to theorize this relation.[636] Using qualitative methodologies, they tend to investigate a small number of religious individuals who actively participate in peace activism. They have found out that everyday religious practices maintain their religious identity and develop religious narratives.[637] Religious narratives then offer an interpretative frame to make sense of their lives and support meaning-making. This study's framework associating religious identity and narratives is an empirical asset of this theoretical perspective. This approach implies that understanding the role of religion need not only be an examination of institutional and influential religious leaders, but also a thorough investigation of everyday practices of religious narratives and interpretation of laypeople. It may give in-depth knowledge of individual justification of peace activism and reconciliation, as well as religion's role in personal healing.

Recommendations for Peace and Conflict Studies

In Chapter 3, this study problematized the scholastic perception of the ethic of victim-centeredness within PACS. While most empirical studies have primarily focused on victims' needs and aspirations, they largely failed to address how victims and their suffering can play a constructive role for social transformation. This study, as a response to this limitation, proposes some implications for peacebuilding practices with an interest in victim-centeredness.

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[632] See Appleby, R. Scott, Atalia Omar, and David Little, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding*, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Rama Mani, 'Cure or Curse?: The Role of Religion in Violent Conflict and Peaceful Governance', *Global Governance* 18, no. 2 (2012): 149–69.

[633] Lee, *Local Ownership in Asian Peacebuilding*.

[634] Daniel Philpott, 'When Faith Meets History: The Influence of Religion and Transitional Justice', in *The Religious in Responses to Mass Atrocity*, ed. Thomas Brudholm and Thomas Cushman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 174–212; Daniel Philpott, 'What Religion Brings to the Politics of Transitional Justice', *Journal of International Affairs* 61, no. 1 (2007): 93–110.

[635] Raymond G. Helmick and Rodney Lawrence Petersen, eds., *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, & Conflict Transformation* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2002).

[636] Nancy T. Ammerman, 'Finding Religion in Everyday Life', *Sociology of Religion* 75, no. 2 (1 June 2014): 189–207; Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*, 1 edition (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Nancy T. Ammerman, 'Lived Religion as an Emerging Field: An Assessment of Its Contours and Frontiers', *Nordic Journal of Religion & Society* 29, no. 2 (July 2016): 83–99.

[637] Nancy T. Ammerman, 'Religious Identities and Religious Institutions', in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 207–24.

Importance of the Everyday

The first recommendation is a focus on the everyday. The concept of the everyday in PACS has developed as part of a post-liberal or local approach to peacebuilding in conflict-affected societies.[638] Scholars in everyday peace emphasize that everyday practices adopted by individuals and groups are the origin of behavioral mechanisms to avoid, navigate and even transform direct and structural violence and segregation.[639] The everyday perspective focuses on ordinary people's language, customs, and religious practices, which are the critical motivations for conflict-affected people to cope with their feelings of insecurity and trauma, and to participate in peace-related activism in the aftermath of violent conflict.[640] Opposing the liberal approach to peacebuilding strategies, which are characterized by institutional or elite-driven practices that are often remote from the everyday dynamic of people's lives, defenders of everyday peace argue that the everyday is the agency for individuals and communities to build their coping mechanisms and resilience.[641]

This study's findings underpin the everyday perspective of peace as victims' coping mechanism. Victims of political violence represent the local voice and agentic roles, based on their everyday emotions and reasoning. Ramifications of violent conflict affect the lives of victims, and this study has shown that victims have their own justification and resilient capacity to cope with their suffering, and to defend reconciliation in diverse aspects. Victims' internal reasoning is thus deeply rooted in their everyday identity, understanding, and interpretation of their suffering. This underlines the need for a consistent and rigorous examination of the everyday constructions that form victims' minds and behaviors. Through understanding these, more effective victim-centered peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies can be built.

Relationship between Victimhood and Morality

Victim-centeredness assumes that victims and victimhood can play a positive role in building sustainable peace in conflictual societies. It pays attention to the constructive possibilities of victims' agentic roles in different practices of peacebuilding. Regarding agentic roles, some

[638] Roger Mac Ginty, 'Everyday Peace: Bottom-up and Local Agency in Conflict-Affected Societies', *Security Dialogue* 45, no. 6 (2014): 548–64; Mac Ginty, 'Everyday Social Practices and Boundary-Making in Deeply Divided Societies'; Oliver P. Richmond and Audra Mitchell, *Hybrid Forms of Peace: From Everyday Agency to Post-Liberalism*, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (Houndmills; Basingstoke; Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Oliver Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon England ; New York: Routledge, 2011); Mac Ginty and Richmond, 'The Local Turn in Peace Building'.
[639] Mac Ginty, 'Everyday Peace'.
[640] Ibid, 549
[641] Ibid.

scholars have noted that victims are often perceived as iconic figures of suffering or moral beacons.[642] This perception, however, has been challenged by empirical evidence that collective victim identity and memory fuel competitive victimhood between antagonistic groups in different contexts.[643]

Having noted both sides of victimhood, this study has observed that victims show a high level of morality with generative concerns for society. Adopting altruistic attitudes towards other victims and future generations, they understand themselves and make meaning for reconciliation with some moral sentiments. Moreover, victims in this study generally avoid demonizing perpetrators, but instead try to see them from a broader angle of national history, power and human nature. Through subjective interpretation, they apply moral perspectives for both themselves and perpetrators, and believe that their moral deeds may serve for the betterment of society. In this process, victims expressed the ethics of peace, justice, and forgiveness, and even reunification in the Korean peninsula. These meanings are, as this study has indicated, attributed to world understanding and self-recognition, while victims recounted their suffering and visions for the future. Therefore, this study encourages research to investigate the detailed relationship between victims' internal processing of morality, and peace and reconciliation. By examining personal narratives that reveal victims' mundane reasoning, researchers may be able to understand the nuanced relationship between victimhood and morality. In this manner, current knowledge of victims' agentic roles can be developed.

Memory-centered Practices

Memory is a critical component of reconciliation. However, victims' needs for remembrance are somewhat underexplored as a practice of reconciliation.[644] There is a debate over whether memories promote reconciliation. Some scholars argue that remembrance is a moral responsibility for victims to be acknowledged and recognized,[645] and others believe that it impedes reconciliation, segregating social members and retraumatizing victims, and that

[642] See, Breen-Smyth, *Truth Recovery and Justice after Conflict*; Breen-Smyth, 'The Uses of Suffering'; Brewer and Hayes, 'Victims as Moral Beacons: Victims and Perpetrators in Northern Ireland'.
[643] Cillian McGrattan, 'Ideology, Reconciliation and Nationalism in Northern Ireland', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21, no. 1 (2016): 61–77; Landon E. Hancock, 'Narratives of Identity in the Northern Irish Troubles', *Peace & Change* 39, no. 4 (2014): 443–67; John D. Brewer and Bernadette C. Hayes, 'Victimhood Status and Public Attitudes Towards Post-Conflict Agreements: Northern Ireland as a Case Study', *Political Studies* 61 (2013): 442–61.
[644] Janine Natalya Clark, 'Reconciliation through Remembrance? War Memorials and the Victims of Vukovar', *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 7, no. 1 (2013): 116–35.
[645] Eddy Souffrant, 'Vulnerability and Beneficence: Remembering the Past for the Sake of Peace', in *Remembrance and Reconciliation*, ed. Rob Gildert and Dennis Rothermel (Rodopi, 2011), 13–24.

therefore they need to forget and forgive the offenders.[646] Participants in this study expressed their feeling that 'to be remembered' would relieve their bitterness and trauma. They addressed memorial needs more than material ones. Remembrance as a practice implies anamnesis, which is a collective act of commemoration of what has gone wrong in the distant past.[647] Unlike amnesia, anamnesis enables people to learn from past experience. Memory through anamnesis is important because victims are eager to be included in historical memory; they want people to acknowledge the wrongful past, and work for a better present and future. From their point of view, remembrance is a civic obligation to achieve reconciliation.

This thesis found that practices of remembrance must be included for two reasons. First, they give victims a symbolic recognition that they are acknowledged and remembered. As addressed in previous chapters, the critical hurdle for reconciliation is the realization that their victimization is forgotten. Different forms of remembrance give them a feeling of relief in the belief that there is an agenda for them to be remembered. Second, remembrance is transgenerational conduct, whereby memory is transmitted to future generations. Participants stress that if reconciliation is to be sustainable, they need to be remembered over generations. Victims endorse consistent practices of remembering that provide a fertile ground for reconciliation.

Victims as History and Peace Educator

Amongst memory practices, history and peace education were frequently mentioned as critical components of sustainable reconciliation by participants. The historical events of civilian massacres and victims' experiences are often forgotten because the official records do not acknowledge them. Participants argued that historical memories and narratives need to be transformed to include their experience as part of modern Korean history. In this sense, most informants supported the revision of history and peace education. Some have participated in programs in public schools, anticipating revised attitudes when they tell their stories of war, victimization, and human rights. Despite the educational potential, however, there has been little research on the roles of victims as peace educators. Some research, as noted in Chapter 3, has investigated how victims and their stories can be an effective tool for education. This study suggests investigating the roles of victims in educational settings and how they can make a difference in promoting awareness of peace-related values, in contrast with conventional peace

[646] Clark, 'Reconciliation through Remembrance?; Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publication, 2006).
[647] Andrew Fitz-Gibbon, 'Perpetual Violence? Mimesis and Anamnesis', in *Remembrance and Reconciliation*, ed. Rob Gildert and Dennis Rothermel (Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2011), 101–2.

education research. This approach underlies not only victims' subjective understanding of peace and reconciliation but also its functions.

9.5 Areas for Further Considerations

Concerning the research questions and findings, there are some areas that need to be further explored. First, this study focused on individual victims of civilian massacres during the Korean War as an example of political violence in Korea. As addressed in Chapter 2, the civilian massacres were a nationwide war crime organized by the government authorities and practiced by the official security forces and local rightists, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians for radicalized political reason. Although the events represent the political form of violence in South Korea, there were other cases of violence which were sponsored by the state. These include the Jeju 4.3 incidents in 1948, the Yeosu-Suncheon massacres in 1948, and the Gwangju People's Uprising in 1980. While this study focused on one particular case, it is limited in its understanding of these victims' perspectives. That is, victims of these massacres may have different ways of understanding history, selfhood, and the issue of reconciliation, as their historical experience may be different from victims of the Korean War. It should be acknowledged that this study's participants do not represent victims voices' of the political violence in South Korea.

Second, as noted in Chapter 2, this study did not include other cases of victims of civilian massacres during the Korean War, that is, mass killings of civilians by US military bombings. This study excluded this case as I believe it needs to be differently categorized. Whereas massacres of political prisoners, Bodo League, and sympathizers, were a type of political violence organized and conducted by the Korean authority for a political reason, the cases of U.S. military bombing were accidental or operative killings of Korean civilians. It is thus an issue of international relations between South Korea and the US, and requires a different approach. Although the exclusion is justifiable, the present study may contribute limited knowledge to civilian massacres in the Korean War. This study proposes that further research includes victims of US bombings.

Third, the research findings imply that victims' internal reasoning is deeply embedded in Koreans' cultural understanding of history, family, and religion. Each finding chapter addresses the deeper narrative reasoning of victims, concerning suffering and reconciliation, and their internal worlds showed that Koreans' interpretation of reconciliation derives from their perspective on nationalism, family culture, and apocalyptic worldview. While these findings notably explain the Korean context, it might be difficult to generalize the research findings for other cases, and they

may be limited to similar or other Asian contexts.

Fourth, this study's findings may also be difficult to apply to other contexts in terms of reconciliation. Whereas no competitive victimhood between victim and perpetrator groups occurs in the South Korean context, other contexts are challenged by group identities colliding with each other, so that reconciliation might aim to the transformation of collective victimhood of each group. Moreover, in the South Korean context where victims are still alive and perpetrators deceased, the quest for reconciliation is focused on how to remember the past and victims, and what to do in the future, rather than directly bringing victims and perpetrators together or transforming groups competing as victims. This contextual difference needs to be carefully considered.

Fifth, further researches need to clarify external factors influencing victims' perspectives to reconciliation. While this study aimed to examine victims' self-reasoning to reconciliation emerging from their autobiographies, it remains questionable that what external factors shape their narratives and ideas of reconciliation. As noted in Chapter 5, narratives transform over time and sociocultural influences play a critical role in developing personal narratives. Thus, more systematic analysis of the external input will be helpful, in order to grasp victims' approach to reconciliation fully.

9.6 Conclusion

This study has attempted to provide a rich explanation about victims and subjectivity in the light of reconciliation in South Korea. The research questions focused on victims' narrative processing to make sense of their suffering and portraying a restored selfhood in the aftermath of political violence, and a process of meaning-making of reconciliation, which is widely discussed in PACS literature, particularly under the theme of victimhood. Within the literature on victim issues in diverse peacebuilding practices, the gist of this study accords with the principle of 'victim-centeredness', centering victims' voices, agentic roles, and morality to bring sustainable peace and social change in deeply divided societies. Acknowledging the limited knowledge on victims' subjective points of view on peace-related values in previous literature, this study has concentrated on victims' internal processing, examining the process of their telling of who they are and how they came to be in the middle of suffering, and generating meanings of reconciliation.

Building upon some narrative perspectives on the self, identity, and meaning-making, this study has abductively presented that three identities, which were nested and separate, affected victims'

interpretation and meaning-making. The research findings commonly support the assumption that victims' self-directed mechanisms, their interpretation of the violent events, suffering, and the self, are the critical source to understand their views on reconciliation. This process shows that there is an internal processing about why and how victims' experiences of political violence come to espouse the social value of reconciliation, despite their life of suffering. It shows that victims do not just follow the value of reconciliation as a social expectation, but instead, defend it via personal appraisal or reasoning. The process looks at victims' interpretations, which are manifested in their autobiographical narratives.

The structural analysis reveals each group's common style of narrative arrangement and other distinctive features within their narratives. Respondents' overall emplotment, despite variations, addresses similar patterns. Other features also appeared, according to the narrative structure. Following the structural analysis, the thematic analysis first presents comprehensive themes that found the contents of narratives. These core themes represent what each participant aimed to deliver through their life stories, and were based on participants' mindsets or worldviews, and self-recognition. These themes showed what kind of perspectives victims maintain in order to make sense of the social world: that they have been marginalized, how they understand who they are, and how they came to be suffering as a result of civilian massacres. This style of narrative processing is in line with the central themes, and supports their motivations of meaning of reconciliation. Because this study reveals the detailed processing whereby victims subjectively generate meanings of reconciliation, the central themes and sub-themes explain how victims become favorable to reconciliation with regard to their experience in the process of developing their autobiographical narratives. Participants in this study mentioned diverse meaning of reconciliation. What this study tells about these meanings is victims' justifications for reconciliation, associated with their understanding of suffering and vision for the society. Interestingly, self-images do not just describe who they are but rather what they ought to do in the present situation, to make the society mature and better. Thus, meanings of reconciliation are generated in close relation to who they are while suffering, on the one hand, and what they see as important for the society on the other. In this respect, victims' social, moral perspective also play an important role.

The strength of this study is a thick description of victims' internal processing with regard to reconciliation after political violence. Although one may say that victims' positions and ideas on reconciliation can change over time, it is still meaningful to enumerate the underlying reasons. It emphasizes the limitations of previous studies, which have focused on victims' needs and aspirations, rather than their subjective points of view, which need more focused investigation of the self.

In conclusion, this study proposes that individual narratives can develop victim-focused practices of reconciliation, and practitioners, policymakers, and scholars need to concentrate further on victims' narratives to understand the vision of reconciliation in deeply divided societies. Moreover, they ought to transform traditional perspectives towards victims, seeing them as objective and passive. Instead, this study encourages further research to focus on victim issues, centering around their subjectivity, so that more broad and effective perspectives can be obtained. These perspectives may promote strategies of building peace in deeply divided societies.

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Appendix: List of Participants and Biographical Information

Ki No-Jung was born in 1948. He lost his father, Ki Hong-Do, in October 1950 for suspected engagement with the Korean People's Army when they occupied the southern part of Korea during the war. His eleven family members were killed in this event. in referring to to this event, Ki often used the term 'extermination'. He has no relatives and grew up with his grandmother. As a farmer, he maintained his ordinary life in the same village since the war. His memory of the past was given by his grandmother for both his parents were killed. His autobiography is full of descriptions of how he has lived silently yet morally. Since he had no family members, his life experience was full of loneliness. He had a strong familial identity, in particular, the Ki family clan. As the only male survivor in his family, he spoke his life story in a way that presented his role in restoring his shattered family. Nonetheless, his description of his life was painful work.

Kim Jang-Ho was born in 1940. His father, Kim Ki-Sung, was arrested and killed by local policemen in 1950. Kim explained that his grandfather and his father were moral and respected people in the village. His father's death had something to do with a personal conflict with a local rightist who informed against his father. As a typical lay businessman, he remembered and narrated his life course in regard to how his family and himself have endured life challenges from social stigmatization. Kim's autobiography had three different layers. First, he narrated his family story extensively. His narratives were full of pride in his family, in particular, his grandfather and father. The second part was about his personal life: 'a life of commie'. He told that his suffering came from the anti-communism narratives and policies, which continually victimized him at a social and public level. Third, he concluded the storytelling by arguing for the value of reconciliation in the society, based on his experience of participation in truth-recovery.

Yoon Jung-Hee was born in 1946. She lost her father, Yoon Yeo-Byung in 1950 when he was arrested and held in preventive custody before the war and killed in the name of a political opponent in the city of Dae-Jeon. Her memory of her father's death was transmitted from her mother, aunts and grandmother. Since she does not remember the past event and is illiterate, her description of her father's story is rather short and vague. However, her tone was direct and concise. Unlike other female participants, Yoon Jung-Hee expressed a high level of pride in herself and her family lineage and told her story in the light of her family. Notably, she spoke of an episode of building the family grave as a symbol of the reconstruction of her family. Although her plots of storylines were not well organized, the central theme was coherent and full of familial concern.

Jung Seok-Hee was born in 1947. In the War, he lost four family members including his grandparents, uncle, and father, Jung Nak-San after the 9.28 Recovery in Mo-Hang-ri, Tae-An in

1950. They were killed as suspects in or sympathizers with communist massacres. Jung explained that the victimization of his family was not only for the governmental execution but also for a personal relationship among villagers. Since 2005, Jung, as an educated and successful businessman, has played a leading role in victim activities, supporting publication, participating in the excavation of remains and demonstrations, and lobbying politicians as a form of resistance to the state power. His autobiographical narratives are marked by his desire to restore his destroyed family and continue the family lineage. His tone was resistant and upright to appeal to his life experience of victimization and exclusion and the social value of reconciliation through social transformation.

Shin Soon-Ran was born in 1936. She lost her older brother, Shin Seok-Ho when local policemen arrested him on 13 August 1949. She provided an autobiographical writing for this study. In her personal writing, she vividly remembered the event from when she was thirteen years old. After her brother was captured, Shin Soon-Ran herself and her all family came under surveillance. She also remembered that she was threatened by a policemen's rifle. She told that she was longing for her brother for her entire life, and therefore from an early age, she wrote poems about her brother and her emotions as victims. Shin participates in memorial services each years and recites her poems for other victims.

Cho Hye-Ja was born in 1945, and her father, Cho Choon-Heung was executed in the Bodo League massacres in the city of Chungju in 1950. Her family lived in Japan, and came back to Korea after independence in 1945. Cho Hye-Ja hardly remembered her father's death, and yet she spoke about her life story after his death confidently. Whereas her brother was discriminated against causing social stigma, it did not affect her life. Nonetheless, she, from an early age, worked as a housekeeper for other families and ran a local pub after her marriage in Seoul. Her husband was erudite but under surveillance for the record of studying at Kim Il-Sung University. She is a Buddhist and has two children. Since 2014, she has participated in some activities with other victims.

Park Chi-Yong was born in 1942. He is a retired pastor of the Korean Presbyterian Church. His father, Park Shin-Deuk, was killed in the Bodo League massacres in the city of Yeoju in 1950. His family was living in a small village called Oe-pyeong-ri, also known as 'the Moscow of Yeoju'. His father was an educated tenant farmer and was arrested by local policemen as soon as the Korean War broke out owing to his membership of the Bodo League. However, Park Chi-Yong described his father as an innocent victim because he was forced to stamp a seal on a paper to join the Bodo League before the war. Park did not see his father being captured and heard about his death from his mother and grandmother. His family were small-scale farmers, and after his father was killed,

Park went to Seoul and lived there for the rest of his life. He did not receive support from his family and could not afford formal education. He attended the evening school while working at a marketplace during the day to support himself in his youth. Although he could avoid social stigmatization as a communist after he left the village, he suffered from public discrimination and poverty under continued surveillance. He maintained the Christian belief from an early age and studied at a Presbyterian theological university. He has worked as a minister of a local church. He applied for a plea for truth-finding at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea in 2005, and since then has been actively involved in the Yeoju Bereaved Family Association and educational programs in public schools.

Jung Chan-Ae was born in 1938. Her father, Jung Un-Chae, was arrested and held in preventive custody in May 1950 when she was thirteen years old. Her parents were prosperous landowners in a village called Ssang-buk-ri, in the city of Buyeo. Her grandparents were the village elders. Her father was arrested because someone in the village accused him of suspicious involvement in communist activities when he supported his friend, Lee Seok-Ki, as a congressmen of the city of Buyeo. Her father was imprisoned in the Daejeon prison and killed by extrajudicial killing in the name of the political opponent after the war broke out. After her father's death, her family's wealth collapsed. She had to earn a living through needlework for her entire life. She became a lay member of the Jehovah's Witness during her married life, and since then has maintained her religious belief. She actively participated in the Victim Associations until she became disabled.

Yoon Ho-Sang was born in 1947. His father, Yoon Yoon-Ki, who was a well-known educator during the Japanese rule, was killed in Bo-Sung city in July 1950. His father had a close relationship with Yeo Un-Hyung. Yoon Ho-Sang himself started working on dealing with the past practices even before the TRCK by joining an embryonic victims' association. He is now a leader of the victims' association.

Jung Byung-Doo was born in 1940. His father, Jung Dal-Soon, was killed in massacres of suspected communist sympathizers in September 1950 in Hu-po-ri, Yeoju. Jung witnessed his father and other people being detained in a village ice storage facility when he delivered meals to him. Before the war, his family was prosperous, but their wealth collapsed after his father's death. Ever since, Jung has lived in the same village, farming until today. His father was one of the founding members of a local church established in 1936, and Jung himself is the elder of the church. He did not have public education but supported his younger siblings. He applied for truth-finding in 2005. Since the truth recovery, he has been actively involved in diverse activities such as memorial services and educational programs at public schools. As the head of Yeoju Victim Association, he kept finding more victims and lobbied the local government to establish a

memorial park in the city of Yeoju.

Kim Gye-Soon was in born in 1946. Her father, Kim Hak-Don, was killed in the Bodo League massacre in 1950. She remembers that her father was the head of the village and was respected by most villagers. She describes her life as a continuation of suffering after her father's death. Throughout her youth, she worked as a housekeeper in other people's houses. She married an incompetent man, and had to raise her children by herself. Although she never heard other people calling her as a 'commie', she understands that her poor life originated from her father's death. Yet, as a mother and a deaconess of a local church, she tried to maintain a normal life for her children. She was actively involved in human right activities, and in finding other victims who kept silence and kept the truth to themselves.

Choi Kyun-Sik was born in 1945. Choi lost his father, Choi Yong-Geun, in September 1950. His father was an English teacher in a public school in Hu-po-ri, Yeoju, and had a close relationship with Yeo Un-Hyeong, a nationalist activist for independence and reunification since the national division in 1945. Choi Kyun-Sik does not remember much about his father and his death and avoids talking about it. After his father's death, he and his family suffered from severe poverty. He was sent to an orphanage and grew up there until the age of thirteen. He is a Vietnam War veteran. He has led a diligent and studious lifestyle. Having a strong Christian family background, Choi has maintained his Christian belief for his entire life.

Moon Yang-Ja was born in 1944 and lost her father, Moon Sang-Kook in December 1950. She remembers that her father was a journalist, living in Taejon area when he was arrested for a political affiliation to communism. Her mother remarried after her husband's death. Moon Yang-Ja and her younger brother were left to live with their grandparents, both of whom died from a mental shock not long after the event. She had to live at their relatives, and her brother was sent to an orphanage. She received no education throughout her life. She did not know what happened to her father until she knew about the TRCK. She has attempted to find the truth about her father since 2005. She participated in diverse remembrance projects, introducing herself and her father's story.

Jung Man-Ho was born in 1938. He lived in Tae-An city and lost his mother and two older brothers during the War. According to his story, the conflict in Tae-An city was intense between leftists and rightists even before the War. His family members and other leftist neighbors were arrested, held in ice storage and massacred when Seoul was recovered by the ROKA. He, as a survivor, had to avoid any contact with rightist neighbors. Even after he moved out of the village, he came under intense surveillance. He experienced diverse discriminations in his life. He is one

of the board members of the Bereaved Family Association.

Jeon Mi-Kyung lost her father, Jeon Jae-Heung in March 1951, when she was three years old. She was the only child of her parents and lived with her grandparents as her mother remarried. She maintained an impoverished life in her youth and married a man with no sense of responsibility towards his family. She raised her two children by running a hair salon in Buyeo city. She tried to commit suicide twice because of a mental disorder. She loves poetry writing. She published a book of poetry, mainly remembering her father. She visits memorial services in each city every year and reads her poems in front of other victims.

Lee Kai-Sung was born in 1939 in Ssang-Gye-ri, Namwon city. His father, Lee Hyun-Yeol, was arrested in the name of a political opponent, imprisoned in Taejon prison, and killed right after the War broke out. Lee Kai-Sung and other remaining family members lived in Mt. Jiri for a while to avoid the Red hunting. He moved to Seoul when he was 18 years old to survive. In Seoul, he worked as an assistant driver and a truck driver. He experienced family dissolution. He has been interested in history for this entire life in an attempt to find out about his father's unjust death. Lee actively engages in diverse activities with other victims and gives lectures to students, telling about his life story. His story went on the air on BBC radio in 2019.

Choi Young-Sup was born in 1944 in Hwa-Sung city. In the War, he lost his father and one of his uncles, who disappeared. He hardly remembers about his father, who used to educate people at his place. He described that his uncle was an active leftist whereas his father was not and was tortured to reveal his brother's whereabouts and killed. By the event, his entire family was dispersed . Choi has taken part in educational programs at public schools in Yeoju city, in order to let students be informed about the Korean War and victimization of civilians.

Lee Se-Chan was born in 1936. His father, Lee Moon-Gu was a member of the Bodo League in Chongju area, and was killed shortly after the War broke out. His grandfather and father were respected by villagers, educating people. Lee Se-Chan visited his father who was confined in a schoolroom several times to deliver lunch boxes and witnessed him being transported for execution. He could not go to school and instead did manual labor to support his younger siblings' education. He and his siblings experienced public discriminations, making his life poor. In the last several years, he has voluntarily engaged in telling his life story and in the excavation of remains.